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IMMIGRATION INTO BRITISH GUIANA.

It is proposed by the Court of Policy and the leading planters and merchants of British Guiana, to renew the scheme of Coolie immigration into that colony under new regulations, which, if adopted, will not only add new burdens to that already over-taxed community, but will effectually reduce the immigrants to a condition as deplorable, in most respects, as that of the slaves of that colony previous to their emancipation. The following memorial to Lord Grey will show the view taken of the subject by the Anti-slavery Committee, which is commended to the serious attention of our readers.

TO THE RIGHT HON. LORD GREY, PRINCIPAL SECRETARY
FOR THE COLONIES, &c., &c.

MY LORD,—The opposition which the Committee of the British and Foreign Anti-slavery Society have felt it to be their duty to offer to the introduction of foreign labourers into the British emancipated colonies, has resulted rather from the nature and consequences of the many schemes adopted by the colonists and by the Government to secure that object, than from objection to the principle on which they were based. In a memorial which they addressed to Lord Stanley, in 1841, they thus expressed themselves, that, taken in connexion with other measures then recommended, they were not opposed to “a wise and judicious scheme of immigration into the emancipated colonies, which, on the one hand, should open the labour market to fair and honourable competition, and, on the other, should guard against the abuses which have hitherto, unhappily, marked the course of colonial experiments in this way; and which should be exclusively under the regulation and supervision of the Government.” The measures which the Committee considered to be necessary in connexion with immigration into the colonies were, that all commercial restrictions should be taken off the commerce of the colonies with this and other countries—that the duties levied on their produce imported into this country should be reduced to the lowest point—and that the produce of all other countries, raised by free labour, should be admitted into competition with it, on equal terms. With respect to the conditions of a healthy immigration, the Committee have declared it to be their opinion that it should be conducted at the expense of those who were to profit by it, and not be defrayed out of the public or colonial taxes—that, both on the score of economy and morals, no scheme of immigration should be permitted which did not insist upon an equality of the sexes being introduced, except in the case of families, which they regarded as the best class of immigrants—that the royal ordinances of September, 1838, relating to contracts and vagrancy, should remain in full force in the Crown colonies, and be regarded as a model for all others requiring immigrants—that the administration of these laws, in all cases arising out of the relations of masters and servants, should be vested exclusively in the hands of a stipendiary magistracy selected by the Crown—that the whole arrangements should be under the exclusive control of the Government—and that the immigrants, after a short residence in the colonies, and a declaration on their part that they wished it, should be entitled to be considered as British subjects. In making these suggestions, the Committee were animated by a sincere desire to promote the welfare of the colonies, and to develop their resources to the largest possible extent, consistent with the principles of equity, humanity, and freedom.

The several communications which the Committee have felt it to be their duty to forward to your lordship and to your predecessors in office, for several years past, have shown how little care has been taken by the colonies to secure a healthy immigration of

labourers; and that gross injustice has been done to the Creole labourers, not only by subjecting them to an unfair competition in the labour market, but by compelling them to pay, in the shape of heavy taxation, for the importation of masses of adult labourers from foreign and distant countries, to their own injury in every respect. The result of these unwise proceedings has been to drive large numbers of the Creole population from the plantations to seek other means of supporting themselves and their families—to burden the colonies with an immense load of taxes, and to mortgage their resources for years to come to pay off the heavy debts, with the interest thereon, which have been contracted—and to introduce to a frightful extent the elements of disorder, immorality, and crime. Yet, notwithstanding the experience of the past, the Committee deeply regret that immigration, on a large scale, is still demanded, and that your lordship is inclined to give it official support.

In the despatch which accompanied the Blue Book relative to the affairs of British Guiana, for 1849, Governor Barkly says—“Immigration must again proceed on an extensive scale to avert the ruin of this colony.” Your lordship, in reply, observes—“I concur with you in thinking that immigration may be made accessory to the prosperity of the colony; but in order to be so, I think that it ought to be conducted on the principles of the Mauritius ordinance, as explained when that ordinance was transmitted to the Governors of the West Indian Colonies.”

With respect to the Mauritius ordinance, and its operation on the liberties and well-being of the immigrants, the Committee have already addressed your lordship in opposition to its enactments; and as that ordinance, if carried into effect in British Guiana, would necessarily aggravate the burthens and restrictions which it imposes on Coolie immigrants, the Committee trust it may never become the law of that colony.

In previous memorials, the Committee have pointed out the dreadful evils consequent upon immigration into the colonies generally, they would now respectfully call your lordship's attention to those which attach to British Guiana in particular.

From returns laid before Parliament, it appears there had been introduced into that colony, under the bounty system, up to the end of 1846, no less than 33,852 immigrants from various countries; in 1847, the number introduced at the public expense was 11,519; and in 1848, 7,430; making in all, exclusive of those which had been in former years imported on private account, 52,801, the great bulk of whom were adult male labourers. The expenses incurred by this vast immigration must have exceeded £400,000; yet we find, from the returns furnished by the Inspector-General of Police, “collected with the utmost care,” that at the close of the year 1848, the total number of immigrants on estates was only 19,122; and of these, only 14,274 were actually employed in their cultivation. It thus appears, that at the end of the year 1848, there were actually fewer immigrants on the estates, engaged in labour, by 4,675, than had been introduced during the years 1847 and 1848. To account for this extraordinary state of things, it must be shown that the immigrants, generally, have either left the colony, or are otherwise employed than on the estates, or have given themselves up to a vagrant life, or have died. It will not be pretended that they have left the colony in any considerable numbers; indeed but few, comparatively, have done so; neither can it be shown that the immigrants have occupied themselves with other engagements than those connected with the plantations, except in the case of the Portuguese, some of whom have turned hucksters and petty tradesmen; nor can it be said that any considerable number are leading a vagrant life, the police prevent that; the fearful alternative then remains, that a

vast number, probably above 25,000—or about one-half of the original number introduced—have perished miserably in British Guiana, from various causes incident to their condition, and the want of that care and attention which their new circumstances imperatively required, and which it was the solemn duty of their employers and the local authorities to have given them. Without going into the melancholy details of past years, the Committee would call your lordship's attention to the facts recorded in the returns of the Commissary of Population, contained in the Blue Book for 1848, namely, that during the years 1847 and 1848, the number of deaths among the immigrants reached to the fearful amount of 3,278, whilst the births were only sixty! Surely, my lord, such terrible statistics as these must convince the most incredulous, that an immigration which reveals so frightful a disproportion in the sexes, and leads to so great a mortality, cannot be right; and that to continue it involves a responsibility from which even the boldest of its advocates ought to shrink. To say, in defence of the system, that particular individuals or estates have derived an advantage from the labour of these immigrants, or that, without them, the colony would have exported less sugar, is to use an argument which might find currency in Brazil and Cuba, where human life is of little value, but can never prevail with humane and Christian men, who hold human life to be sacred, and who dare not do evil that good may come, nor violate the first principles of morality, that the fortunes of certain planters and merchants may be secured. Taking the lowest and most sordid view of this subject, it is now clear, that considered as a question of economy, and the supply of a useful body of labourers, such schemes of immigration cannot on any ground be justified. From first to last, they have been conducted on false principles; have proved costly in the highest degree to the communities who have suffered, or rather have been compelled to suffer them; and should they be persevered in, will crush out the energies of the colonies, and render more complete than ever, the ruin of all classes of their inhabitants.

The Committee dwell not on the moral degradation into which a community, such as that which exists in British Guiana, must necessarily be plunged by pouring in upon it hordes of sensual and idolatrous Hindoos, and barbarous Africans. It cannot be admitted, my lord, for one moment that the Government has the right, though it may exercise the power, of thus dealing with any community; neither will they dwell upon the wrongs which these schemes of immigration have inflicted upon the emancipated classes: they were entitled, on every principle of justice and fair dealing, to be left at liberty, so far as the Government was concerned, to make the best terms with their employers; but to be taxed, without their consent, for purposes into which their interests did not enter, and of which they formed no part—to be taxed for the benefit of their employers, that they might reduce their wages to the minimum point,—to a point so low that in order to maintain their independence and to sustain themselves they have been compelled, the best and most thrifty of them, to leave the estates, and seek subsistence elsewhere—was not just, and, in the opinion of the Committee, ought not to have been done. The Committee do not mean to affirm that immigration has been the sole cause of the abandonment of the estates, by the great body of the Creole labourers, since emancipation; they are fully aware that other causes have also operated to bring about this event: they allude to the shameful manner in which the people have been too often treated on the plantations; the irregularity in the payment of wages; the spirit of the legislation to which they have been subjected; and the determination to coerce them when within the power of their employers. The Committee deeply regret this state of things; but they are satisfied it will be aggravated rather than cured by increased immigration.

Already pressed beyond the capacity of endurance by heavy taxation, the Committee would not feel surprised if large numbers of the Creole population should retire into remote districts of the colony, beyond the range of the oppressive power now exerted over them, and the civilising influence of Christian teachers. On this, as well as other grounds already referred to, the Committee would entreat your lordship to pause before you encourage any further importation of immigrants into British Guiana; and that your lordship would urge upon the authorities, and all directly interested in the cultivation of estates, the necessity of using conciliatory means, and honourable treatment, in order to win back the people to their old employments.

The Committee feel it to be their duty to press this subject the more earnestly on your lordship's attention, from the fact now

openly avowed in the colony by its leading men, that henceforth it is intended to look to the British treasury for the supply of the means for carrying into effect a new and gigantic scheme of immigration, "under proper regulations;" which means, in the judgment of the Committee, that the people of this country are to advance the necessary funds for the importation of an unlimited number of immigrants, and that the Government shall sanction their being placed in a state of modified slavery. In proof of this, the Committee need only refer your lordship to the Report on immigration, laid before the Combined Court on the 22nd of January last, by Messrs. Croal and Vander Gon Netscher, two of its members, in which provisions of the most servile character are unblushingly recommended for the adoption of that Court; and to the proceedings of a public meeting of planters and merchants held in George Town, on the 31st of January, presided over by the Hon. Peter Rose, assisted by the leading members of the Court of Policy. Should the doctrines laid down in the Report, and defended in the public meeting, be sanctioned, the freedom of the immigrants will exist only in name, and they will be as completely enslaved, for a specified period of time, as were the negro population under the old slave ordinances, whilst a larger amount of labour will be exacted from them than could be legally required from the negroes under those ordinances.

Trusting that the representations now made may receive your lordship's early and serious attention, and that, in view of all the circumstances of the case, your lordship will refuse your sanction to the proposed scheme of immigration,

I have the honour to be,

(On behalf of the Committee,)

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) JOHN SCOBLE, Secretary.

Anti-slavery Office, 27, New Broad-street,
22nd March, 1850.

THE DEBATE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS ON MR. HUTT'S MOTION FOR THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE AFRICAN SQUADRON.

An unusual interest attaches to the debate on Mr. Hutt's motion, which took place on the 19th ult., for the withdrawal of the African squadron, whether it relates to the object of the motion itself, to the incidents which accompanied it, or to the result. The object which the honourable gentleman had in view can only be partially gathered from the terms of his motion; viz., "That an humble address be presented to her Majesty, praying that her Majesty will be pleased to direct that negotiations be forthwith entered into for the purpose of releasing this country from all treaty engagements with foreign states, for maintaining armed vessels on the coast of Africa to suppress the traffic in slaves." To annul the treaties, which this motion contemplates, as a means to a particular end, would completely relieve Spain and Brazil from all obligations to suppress the slave-trade, or to liberate the Africans, who have been introduced into their colonies or territories illegally, from the slavery in which they are held. It would appear, from certain statements which have been made, that Mr. Hutt intended, if he had been successful in his motion, to have proposed some scheme for the abolition of the slave-trade; but, we fear, from all the information that we can gather on this point, that his remedy would only issue in a larger development of that infamous traffic than has at any time existed; and that our country would again be implicated, under plausible prettexts, in carrying it on.

Had Mr. Hutt's motion been decided upon its merits, without reference to incidental questions, there can be but little doubt that, whether right or wrong, a majority of the House and of the country are decidedly in favour of the withdrawal of the cruisers from the coast of Africa. Had not the Government made it a ministerial question, many of its ordinary supporters would, undoubtedly, have voted with Mr. Hutt, and many who refused to vote either way, would, but for political reasons, have swelled his ranks, and decided the question. We regret that Government should have felt itself compelled to have taken the course which it has done, because we feel that it had within its power ample means for giving full effect to the treaties for the suppression of the slave-trade, whilst it relieved the country thereby from the expense connected with the present inefficient system of suppression.

The result of the debate has given the Government a momentary triumph; but we think it impossible that it can persist very long

in its present policy, unless, indeed, to the present mode of suppression some new and efficient measures be added, which at present are unknown to the public. We have thought it desirable to preserve in our columns the opinions entertained by the public press, and have, therefore, selected the most important articles which have appeared *pro* and *con.* in relation to the present debate.

(Times.)

It is a thing scarcely credible, did we not know it to our cost, that in these days of pinching and almost discreditable economy we are spending altogether somewhere about a million a year in doing at one side of the Atlantic what we as deliberately undo at the other. This is what we are about with our African squadron. A house divided against itself, we are told, cannot stand; but that is the very spectacle with which we are edifying the world. While our navy is attempting to seal Africa, so that not one single recruit shall be supplied to the slave-gangs of Cuba and Brazil, our commercial system is giving the people of those countries every possible inducement to break through our own blockade. We apply all our force on one side, and all our seductions on the other. The British sailor has the choice of cruising in the Gulf of Guinea, to sink every slaver that runs the gauntlet of our fleet, or of bringing home from the opposite shore the produce of that slaver's employers. In the way in which this trade is conducted they are virtually the same parties we have to deal with; and the Spanish gentleman, with whom we shake hands at Havannah, may any day hear that his ship has been sunk, and his partner killed by our cannon in the Bight of Benin. "A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways," and certainly there is no stability, or meaning, or character in our ways in this particular question. In the ports where slaves are bought, and sugar sold, and where the money we pay for the latter is immediately exchanged for the former, our conduct is a mystery and scandal. They who are content with first impressions think the English abominable hypocrites; those who go below the surface think them fools. For our own part, we hardly know which they are; but the truth lies between those two suppositions. It is now five or six years since it was the general opinion in this country that the African squadron was kept up from mere reluctance to confess a great error. That, of course, is an argument the force of which is in the exact ratio of the folly to be repented of; for the greater the folly the greater the shame of confessing it, and the greater the inducement to persevere for the sake of consistency. If that is our case—if, having now for many years done the most foolish thing that a nation could well do, we think it a point of honour to go on doing it for ever—it is hard to say whether we are more to be pitied or despised.

It is a waste of reputation, of money, of lives, of influence, and of power. In all machinery, whether material or political, above all things we have to beware of such blunders as unnecessary dead weight and conflicting strains. But in this instance our right hand is pulling one way and our left hand another; like a child, or a drunken labourer, we are trying to raise the log on which we are standing. On our own admission, every sixpence we spend in suppressing the slave-trade entails another sixpence in the increased price of our sugar. That is the supposition on which the nation proceeds. It may not be quite true; but if it be not true, the case is still worse. What if the slave-trade, if left to itself, will work its own cure? The slaveholding countries of America are so saturated and overcharged with their negro population that they cannot hold much more without positive danger. A considerable addition might turn the scale against the master in favour of the slave, or at least compel a much gentler usage than has hitherto prevailed. Cuba, at all events, will not see her negro slaves much increased without another insurrection. But if these countries are thus full to repletion, it is obvious that we are only maintaining the existing state of things, and staving off the natural day of negro emancipation, by our attempts to keep down the stock of slave labour. This would be to protect the monopoly of slave-sugar while we have abolished the monopoly of free. The man in *Horace* with more money than discretion, "*Diruit, edificat, mutat quadrata rotundis.*" We are pulling down and building up at the same time, and squaring our practice to our principles, while we are rounding our theory to our convenience with equal assiduity. Crusades are generally disgraced by inconsistencies, for principle is never honest unless it be rational, or secure unless it be moderated. The re-conquest of the Holy Sepulchre was an occasion of violence and licentiousness; and in our country philanthropy has grown into a fashion side by side with the grossest oppressions. In the instance before us inconsistency is not a mere accident or abuse of the system, but the very soul of it. We encourage a trade for our convenience, in order that we may make a virtue of pretending to suppress it.

This is a civil war fought, for the sake of appearances, in the torrid zone. We continually boast our sole exemption from this universal scourge, but we are only fighting out elsewhere a quarrel between our cheap sugar and our costly philanthropy. It is a war between the dry docks of Woolwich and the wet docks of Blackwall and Wapping. From the one bank of the river go forth war steamers for the suppression of the slave-trade, from the other go forth the merchantmen that pay for its

sustentation. Why not save a little trouble, and moor the African squadron in the Thames, to sink every merchantman with a cargo of slave-sugar on board—if it can be detected? If it cannot, then give up the attempt altogether.—*March 19.*

(Times.)

Apropos to slavery, we have to record an act of personal subjugation, as bad as anything in the evidence given last year to the Committee of the Lords. The scene was not the Bight of Biafra, nor Gallinas, but Downing-street; the victims were not the glossy children of Ham, but 160 members of the British House of Commons; and the ostensible author of the extraordinary outrage was not a Brazilian skipper, but the head of her Majesty's Government. By the sound of the Treasury whip the unfortunate captives were mustered early in the abovementioned barracoon, and there shortly and sharply instructed in the terms of their servitude. Without so much as allowing them the opportunity of tendering their spontaneous support, Massa Russell, for so we must call the principal actor on this occasion, informed his captives that if they did not support him in the blockade of the African slave coast, he would turn them all out into outer darkness to find a new master if they could. It was in vain that they protested and demurred, talked of money and reputation, and other topics customary with sensible men; his lordship would take no denial. Their opinions they might keep, but their votes he must have. As appears from the division last night, his lordship succeeded to the desired extent. The poor sufferers came out lamenting their hard fate, but few of them dreamt of actual resistance. Thus, by a sort of vicarious bondage, the British M.P. has taken the place of the African, and done taskwork to the music of the lash. Such, in fact, is the history of last night's division in the Commons. Let not the public be deceived for one moment. The 232 gentlemen who vote for keeping this Old Man of the Sea on our shoulders, themselves inwardly groan at the pressure. We believe that any one of them would rather carry a sack of coals, or all the blue books of the session, from Westminster to St. Paul's, than vote away another million for this deplorable humbug. *Sed fata obstant.* If they don't do as they are bid, Lord Palmerston will go out, Lord John will go out, and it is impossible to say who will come in; perhaps Mr. Disraeli, perhaps Mr. Cobden, perhaps Mr. Feargus O'Connor.

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Now, in all seriousness, what are to be ministerial measures, and what are not? A Minister does not derive all his power from his own person, essence, and being. He is a creation of Parliament, just as that is a creation of the country. Of course, if he produced his majority out of the fountain of his own perfections, he might impose on it what laws and conditions he pleased, as he might on any other creation of his brain. But, in our view of these matters, a party is just as independent as its leader, and if it owes him a considerable degree of obedience, he owes to it a larger degree of consideration. Above all, he is not to impose ministerial questions at discretion. If it supports him in free-trade, or the colonies, or education, and other standing matters of Parliamentary dispute, it does not follow that he is at liberty to impose a new tax on its allegiance, in the shape of a perpetual blockade costing a million a year—not a farthing less—and absolutely ineffective for its purpose. At this rate no man can say what he may not be called on to vote for. He rises in the morning a free agent, and reads in the notice paper that before night he will be committed to that which he holds in utter abomination. It is bad enough to be pledged to heaps of things by force of custom and prescription, merely because one was born to them or bred to them; but worse, still, to be under an indefinite obligation to think and do what one has not at present the least idea of. But what is the value of a majority made up of such materials? The country must take this matter into its serious consideration. A large proportion of our fleet—a fourth, it is said—is employed in this interminable fool's errand in the tropics, without the least benefit whatever, but a great deal of harm. A million a year is a low estimate of the expense. By the admission of the philanthropists, as expressed in the amendment placed on the notice paper, not only is that expenditure quite thrown away, but it involves the dire contingency of "remonstrances with other powers, consistent with the character of this country." So it is out of the question to talk of reducing our fleet under these circumstances. This one monster waste swallows up all our savings. It is a mere farce to cut down the salaries of poor little officials, and do other ignominious cheese-parings, flint-skinning sort of work, if all the while we are playing at pitch and toss with a million at a time. Yet this is to be made a ministerial question. Then economy is not a ministerial question. The Whigs first came in on the Civil List. They stick in on the African squadron. Out of the Civil List they have contrived to save a few odd thousands, which, in the course of half a century or so, will amount to one year's cost of the African squadron.—*March 20.*

(Morning Chronicle.)

Mr. Hutt's motion is not carried, but the African squadron is doomed. Its fate may be read at a glance in the lame and halting apologies of its advocates. The mere announcement of the member for Gateshead's renewed attack on that costly piece of futility, obliged men to shift their

ground and lower their tone; and it is evident from the official replies which were last night made to his judicious motion and masterly speech, that the old defences are abandoned in despair as no longer tenable. On former occasions the invariable plea was—not, indeed, that the squadron *was* really successful in accomplishing its purpose—but that there was every reason to hope and believe that it *would* be, after a while, if the country would only consent to give a fair trial to some new and ingenious suggestion for increasing its efficiency. Past failures were usually confessed and deplored, with tolerable candour—but the scheme was always “going to be” successful and effective, in consequence of some promising novelty just about to be introduced into the plan of operations. At last, however, we seem to have come to the end of these perpetual appeals to a futurity which at no single period has performed any one of the magnificent promises made in its name. The friends of the system have completely changed their tack. Instead of contending that the squadron, although a failure hitherto, is on the very point of achieving success, if Parliament and the country will but have faith and patience for another year or two—they mostly tell us that its *immediate* withdrawal would be followed by certain painful and dishonourable consequences, and that at all events *some* squadron must be kept up on the African station for the protection of “legitimate trade.” In other words, the squadron is pretty distinctly admitted to be hopelessly ineffectual for its ostensible purpose of slave-trade suppression; but it is urged, first, that to recall it suddenly, and without any attempt at substituting other means in its place, might increase the evil which we have vainly laboured to diminish—next, that after having gone on so long, we are bound in honour to persevere, right or wrong—and, lastly, that our cruisers, although totally useless for the objects of philanthropy, are highly useful and necessary for those of commerce.

This is evidently giving up the whole matter. The first plea is irrelevant—the second absurd—and the third disingenuous. The utility or inutility of the African squadron is a question by itself, and any decision which Parliament may arrive at respecting it, in no way prejudices the collateral question of the efficacy of other means that may be devised for accomplishing the same ultimate end. To make it a point of honour and conscience to persist in a plan which experience has condemned, is, under any circumstances, simply ridiculous. As regards the “legitimate-trade-protection” argument, it is enough to say that if a squadron is really wanted on the African coast for commercial purposes, nobody will object to maintaining one; but it is sheer hypocrisy to disguise a mercantile and political aim under a philanthropic pretext—and it would be little short of insanity to keep up the machinery of a blockade, when our object is merely to protect our commerce. Turn and twist it how you will, the root of the question is, the actual or probable efficiency of our anti-slave-trade blockade for anti-slave-trade purposes; and when *this* has once been decided in the negative—as it has been by two successive committees of the House of Commons, by the deliberate testimony of those of our naval officers who have had the best means of forming a correct and unbiassed judgment, by the unvarying experience of upwards of thirty years, by the present Premier’s official declarations and acts when Colonial Secretary, and by the verdict of Exeter-hall philanthropy itself (at the great meeting of 1840)—the abandonment of the system, whether with or without a “substitute,” can no longer be a matter of rational controversy.

And, after all, this is felt, though not avowed. The official apologists of the system still endeavour to suggest—though they shrink from broadly affirming—that the squadron is somehow effectual for its proposed end. Mr. Labouchere even goes the length of pressing Sir Charles Hotham into the service of the cause—though, as is well known to all who have bestowed the most cursory attention on the evidence given by that gallant and experienced commander before the Lords’ committee of last session, he is one of the most decided and unsparing opponents of the whole system. As the use made of Sir Charles Hotham’s name is not an inapt specimen of the kind of argument to which the advocates of the blockade now feel themselves reduced, we may take this opportunity of refreshing the public memory as to what he really did say before the committee. He told their lordships, that the result of his experience as commander of the squadron (from 1846 to 1849) was, that he had become “more and more confirmed as to the impracticability of putting the slave-trade down with our present resources”—that “as you stop it in one place, it breaks forth in another”—that “it would take five men-of-war to watch the Congo river alone”—and, in a word, that the whole British navy together would be insufficient to repress this ubiquitous and ceaseless traffic, so long as it should be found commercially profitable. For, when asked, “Are you prepared to state how many steamers you think it would require to put down the slave-trade effectually on the west coast of Africa?” he replied—“I do not think *any* amount that we could find would be effectual, inasmuch as I believe that the slave-trade could be carried on from any part of Morocco down to the Orange River, and Mozambique on the other side, and therefore your whole navy is unavailable.” Yet because Sir Charles Hotham, while thus emphatically declaring his conviction of the futility of the whole business, is adverse, on special grounds, to the sudden, total, and unconditional withdrawal of

the squadron, we are to regard him as somehow an advocate of the policy which he so energetically, and almost scornfully condemns. Those who wish to see more fully and precisely how the question stands, considered as one to be decided by weight of testimony and authority, will find in Mr. Gladstone’s speech ample materials for forming an opinion.

For the present, this strange “institution of the country”—the blockade of thousands of miles of coast, for the purpose of suppressing a contraband traffic which lives and thrives in spite of us—has obtained another year’s lease. But Lord John Russell knows, we doubt not—or will know, on cool reflection—the true value of an annual triumph on an annual motion which the experience of each successive year strengthens with additional evidence, and which is constantly enlisting in its support an increased amount of intelligent conviction. Not all the eloquence in the world will save an “institution” which notoriously works badly. Strong words, big words, and hard words are of no avail against stronger, bigger, and harder facts. It is nonsense to call a movement “retrograde” which happens to be in the direction of truth and common sense; and though the Premier may deem it “dastardly” for a nation to retract an error, to close a series of admitted failures, and to cut short a cruel, hopeless, and absurd experiment, he will assuredly find, at no distant period, that the English people recognise no sanctity in a detected blunder, and no “finality” in a proved folly.—*March 20th.*

(Daily News.)

* * * * * Ministers have allowed public opinion to outrun them upon this question. Lord Palmerston, so go-ahead in many measures of foreign policy, has lingered behind in this: and he has kept Lord John back by the skirts. Now, the very essence of whiggism is to keep up with public opinion, or to tarry but a few steps in the rear of it. But to act this part requires great vigilance, sharpness, sensibility, qualities possessed and practised much better out of office than in. And the present Ministers have been so long in, that they have forgotten them. Public opinion has been yearly, daily, withdrawing from the system of coercion on the coast of Africa—public opinion of all kinds, from the philosopher who would make Quashee work under the whip, to the anti-slavery men who would make a spoiled child of him. And Ministers have, after all, no plea to offer but their own laziness for being left behind.

What was Mr. Labouchere’s best argument? That he was not prepared with a shadow of a substitute; that England had established a police, a very unwarrantable and expensive police, on that horrible coast, and that to withdraw it at once would be to let loose all the rogues, and do all the harm possible. But no one wants Ministers in reality to do more than to take serious steps for withdrawing from a useless and untenable position. They had but to promise this, and the debate would soon have been closed. But Ministers, or at least Mr. Labouchere, took high and defiant ground. The same old arguments were put forth, that the blockade might be rendered more efficient; that it would give an opportunity for treating with kings and chieftains; that the blockade, if it had not prevented the export of slaves to the Brazils, had at least rendered them dear there, and, in rendering them dear, had made it the interest of the Brazilian planters to treat them well. The idea! that we are to levy a million each year upon the British taxpayer, in order to make the slave in the Brazils a precious and well-treated commodity. Well might one exclaim that such charity ought to begin at home, and expend itself on the bogs of Connaught. Surely there are other parties more interested than we can or ought to be in keeping up the price of slaves in the Brazils and Cuba—that is, the owners of the present black population there. Would it not be better and cheaper, and more true policy, to get them to make laws against the slave-trade, than for us to do it for them, and even offend them by doing so?

We were at the same time sorry to hear Mr. Labouchere denounce any emigration or transport of negroes to the West Indies as a renewal of the slave-trade. It has been fully proved, that the transport of negroes or slaves to Brazil and Cuba cannot be prevented by a squadron, which the more it raises the price and the demand by its intervention, raises just in the same proportion the incentives to overcome that prevention. To assert at the same time that negroes cannot be transported as freemen, is at once to declare that the Brazil system can neither be put down by coercion or competition—in fact, that it is immortal. One of Mr. Labouchere’s hopes lies in the extension of Liberia. If free trade and transit to and from the West Indies was established for the negro, the whole coast might be converted into a Liberia—not, indeed, an American Liberia, based on a prohibitive and exclusively trading system, but a free one in every respect, and pacific as well as free.

The ministerial crisis, as the French call it, occupied the House, however, more than the merits or demerits of the blockading squadron. On the last the majority could not require much time to make up its mind. But to upset the Government, and reverse the questions and the promises of the session, was a matter of more serious and tardy consideration; and therefore the debate closed with a division that gave a majority of seventy-eight to the ministry.—*March 20th.*

(Examiner.)

In Swift's advice to servants the honour of the house is the reason for every recommended act of waste and mischief. For the continuance of the African blockade the same plea is put forth—it is for the honour of the country that it should persevere in an abortive undertaking—it is for the honour of the country that it should not confess itself unable to protect a fourth part of the world against the slave-trade.

Thus, having once attempted an impossibility, our dignity requires that we shall cleave to the vain endeavour until some substitute can be found. Some few years ago it was fondly imagined that this desideratum was discovered, and that the model farm was to civilize all Africa and supersede the blockade—about as equal to the object of repression as the other was to that of civilization. The small device for a vast effect upon which hopes are now built is a texture of treaties 2,500 miles long with African chiefs, by means of which legitimate commerce is to supersede the slave-trade. But is this hope greatly encouraged by the remarkable proofs we have everywhere had of the efficacy of treaties? And are those with a wilderness of petty African chiefs likely to be more scrupulously observed than those with civilized European and South American States? And, meanwhile, what are we doing? Are we diminishing and mitigating, or are we aggravating, the horrors of the slave-trade? Every obstacle that our squadron presents to the shipment of slaves by so much increases the sufferings of the captives inland. When they cannot be embarked at one place they are carried off by cruel forced marches to another, where a sufficient supply of food has not been provided, and where they have to suffer every sort of privation and hardship, sometimes terminated by a massacre, to save trouble and further expense, if the difficulties of shipment appear insuperable, or the delay not worth the cost. Next, when got on board, the vessels, which have been kept long waiting for the slaves through the impediments of the blockade, or moved from point to point to take in their cargoes, are generally short of water, the allowance of which is consequently horribly, almost incredibly, small. In proportion to the chances of capture, the craft employed in this infernal service are often very small and slightly built, which last circumstance greatly increases the heat of them, between which and leaking they are half sieves, half ovens, and whether large or small they are crowded to torture, the shocking and loathsome details of which we shall not now repeat. A capture after they have made the middle passage subjects the poor wretches (to whom, as in mockery, the name of rescued is applied) to a repetition of the miseries, when they are in a condition even less able to bear them than before; and upon the lowest calculation, for one black that perishes in the first transit ten perish in the return, and the sufferings of the remainder are increased in the same proportion. Further, to avoid the evidences of equipment subjecting vessels to seizure, they want all the arrangements necessary to alleviate the sufferings of the captives.

Let us hear the statement of Mr. Gladstone as to the consequences of the blockade—

"It was in evidence in the books upon the tables of both Houses of Parliament that in 1847 and 1848 the proportion of slaves carried, instead of being three to every two tons, as it was before the trade was regulated, was, on the average, nearly eight slaves to two tons, and in some instances nine or ten slaves to one ton. With such a state of crowding as that, there must necessarily be an increase of mortality; and it should be borne in mind, too, that the increase occurred on a voyage of from 25 to 30 days, as compared with one of 50 days, as it was 60 years ago. Taking the increase of mortality at 10 per cent., which certainly was not an immoderate estimate, what did it come to? It absorbed every year the lives of 8,000 or 9,000 slaves in the middle passage. Remember, that was a larger number than you gave liberty to, in any year, by the united efforts of all your cruisers. If, in order to set at liberty 5,000 or 6,000 persons we caused the deaths of 9,000, and aggravated the sufferings of many thousands more, was he not justified in saying that the sum of human misery, as regarded slaves carried across the ocean, was increased by our repressive system?"

In attempting the blockade of a sea-board of 2,500 miles, as if the continent of Africa were an Isle of Wight, we have undertaken a task in ridiculous disproportion to our powers; but the effect has not simply been the failure of the object proposed, but the aggravation of the evil intended to be repressed. We have made bad worse. The weight of our power, where it has been brought to bear, has only given more intensity to the barbarities of the slave-trade; and if the African captives had a voice in the matter, they would say, "Leave us to our fate, you only aggravate it by the impediments short of prevention you interpose. The expedients to baffle your cruisers and provide against rescue augment our sufferings tenfold. Cease to be cruel, to be kind. The reaction against your philanthropy makes the most infernal barbarity of our captors and keepers."

The question is triumphantly asked, what other means than the blockade can be suggested for the suppression of the slave-trade, but this involves the *petitio principii* that the blockade serves for suppression, which is denied by all the evidence entitled to any weight. Is a sheer

failure to be persisted in because nothing else can be proposed? Are we to continue to waste a portion of our strength in an endeavour worse than futile, because the whole of our strength is not equal to the gigantic task we have undertaken? * * * * *

But once in for an error, and it seems that the dignity of the country cannot allow it to recede. Sir C. Hotham's *dictum* is quoted (and be it observed that he admits the inefficacy and evils of the blockade), that the honour and interests of the country are involved in the maintenance of the blockade till some other expedient can be substituted; but we are utterly at a loss to comprehend how the honour and interests of the country can be bound up with what is worse than nugatory for its object. Sir C. Hotham, indeed, gives an opinion that if the trade was left without interruption it would be carried on in inferior vessels, and by persons wanting capital, and practising upon the unhappy slaves a more cruel economy. But with the evidence before us of what the vessels now are, and what the packing of the live contraband cargoes is, and the supplies to support nature, always a scanty allowance of water, and sometimes as little as a teacupful a head for three days, it seems utterly impossible that the sufferings of the passage can be made greater than they are at present, consistently with the object of preserving the lives upon which a nefarious profit is to be made.

In proof of the success of the blockade, the increased number of captures is instanced; but it is to be remarked, that in proportion to the increased number of ventures will be the number of captures. The smuggler never repines at occasional captures, he looks upon them as the fences of his trade, the risks but for which there would be a competition destroying profits. Another alleged evidence of success is the increased price of slaves in the markets of Cuba and Brazil. We very much doubt this statement. Certain it is, that up to 1848 the prices of slaves had in the Brazils been, with the exception of one year, in the gradual course of decline from the commencement of the blockade, and had fallen on the whole from £75 to £40.

Indeed, to see the effect of the blockade, the arrivals on the coast of the Brazils must be observed, not the interruptions on the coast of Africa. When the squadron does anything, it displaces the trade, shifts it from one place to another. It diverts the wicked traffic from the outlets the most convenient to others less so, the wretched slaves suffering by the change. As we have before observed, her Majesty's ships no more suppress the slave-trade than their hulls suppress a drop of the water on which they float and move. It is merely displacement.—*March 23.*

(Spectator.)

Lord John Russell insists upon being tried as a statesman by his African policy; so that we have a measure for him suggested by himself. He makes the maintenance of the African squadron a Cabinet question. Success is the received test of merit in all arts: we must test Lord John's merit as a statesman by his African victories over the slave-trade. It is his own suggestion.

But, in the judgment on the policy, Ministers repudiate every practical test. They make it a matter of hypothesis, of presumption, of supposition, of religious creed; but disclaim all tangible mundane tests—except tests of that kind on their own side. The African blockade squadron is costly; but, says Mr. Labouchere, "it is not a question of pounds, shillings, and pence." Yet the same man boasts that the blockade raises the price of the slave from £26 10s. to £100. But, says Mr. Hutt, the enhancement of price represents, with the large risk, the enormous profits of the smuggler: just as British goods penetrated through the blockade of the Berlin and Milan decrees to the Tuilleries, just as silk from France entered the House of Commons itself through all our restrictive obstacles, so through the blockade the slave passes from Africa to America. Says Mr. Labouchere, "We are talking of human beings, not silk handkerchiefs: I hold *that* to be a complete answer to the honourable member." It is complete nonsense. The slave is a subject of merchandise; whether he *ought* to be smuggled or not, is beside the question whether he *is* smuggled or not. "It would be doubly or a hundredfold more wicked to smuggle a human being, and therefore he *is not* smuggled,"—such is Mr. Labouchere's argument. The fact remains that he is smuggled: but Mr. Labouchere holds that the fact is disproved, or neutralised—we scarcely know which—by its excessive wickedness!

Remember, we are examining the reasons hazarded by Ministers for the policy on which they have expressly staked their existence as a Government.

If you abolish the blockade, argues Lord John in support of this the vital principle of his Cabinet, you expose the free labour and British interests of the West Indies to "ruinous rivalry." Mr. Labouchere had repudiated the argument of "pounds, shillings, and pence;" but that does not forbid its being used on his own side. "You must not remove the blockade, because it will facilitate the industry of Brazil and Cuba in the production of sugar, and expose the West Indies to ruinous competition; and it is not a question of pounds, shillings, and pence, for the gain of this country,"—that is the ministerial argument, unadulterated or altered by us. It happens to be precisely the argument that

was used against the removal of the prohibitory duties on foreign sugar : but then, Mr. Labouchere and Lord John talked about the gain to the revenue, the saving to the British consumer, the humble cup of tea, and so forth. It was Lord John who began the policy of stimulating Brazil trade by cheapening its produce in the English market; and *having* exposed the West Indies to that "ruinous rivalry," he pleads his desire not to expose the West Indies to "ruinous rivalry," as the pretext for keeping up a squadron which does not prevent Brazilian industry or the rivalry.

Lord John deprecates "the disturbance of African civilisation." One thing the blockade squadron does prevent—the free transit of African labour to the West Indies, where the African would not be a slave, but a freeman in the best school of African civilisation.

The experiment of forcible prevention, says Lord John, must not be abandoned, because it has been tried so long. And has failed. In 1822, the Duke of Wellington told the Congress of Vienna, that it only enhanced the horrors of the middle passage; in 1839, Ministers declared as much, in support of the Niger expedition; in 1840, Exeter Hall and all the anti-slavery authorities concurred in that statement; accurate and cautious Mr. Bandinel, the most experienced authority at the Colonial Office, has said so; the most competent and accredited officers of the blockade squadron *now* say so. Lord John's great reliance on future success is "not to despond"—not to exhibit Mr. Gladstone's "want of moral courage." Mr. Gladstone's want of moral courage consists in his not having the boldness to uphold a conclusion in the teeth of facts; but in that sort of achievement consists the peculiar moral courage for which Lord John is distinguished—he despises Mr. Gladstone for the want of it. Mr. Gladstone is a cowardly fellow, who is vanquished by reason and proof; which is contemptible.

Mr. Labouchere is "willing to rest the whole case on the evidence of Sir Charles Hotham." Sir Charles Hotham declares that the decrease or increase of the traffic is wholly independent of the squadron, and wholly dependent on the commercial demand for slaves. But while Sir Charles draws that clear conclusion as the result of the facts under his observation, he happens to hold what he calls a "speculative opinion," that if the blockade were abandoned without substitute, the trade and its miseries would increase. That exactly suits the ministerial view: for facts they do not care—their "moral courage" is superior to that intellectual subjection; but a "speculative opinion"—when it suits them—is all they want. So Mr. Labouchere roundly avows, "Nobody believed that the squadron would put an end to the traffic;" but by adopting Mr. Hutt's resolution to back out of the idle combination, and take counsel with other countries as to the future policy, "they *would* at once throw the ocean open to the traffic, and plunge Africa in scenes of bloodshed, horror, and alarm." Precisely what takes place now. But Ministers have no shudder for the "bloodshed, horror, and alarm," that actually exist; they only shudder at the supposititious "bloodshed, horror, and alarm," that would be. Their feeling is excitable only in the subjunctive mood. The "moral courage" which perfectly contemns what is, quails before the hypothetical presentment of the same image.

Again, let it be observed, we are but recapitulating the reasons adduced by Ministers in support of that policy on which they stake their existence as a Government.

Mr. Labouchere objected that Mr. Hutt had proposed no substitute. Mr. Hutt declared that he had one to propose. Ministers would not hear of it.

There is one mode in which blockade by naval forces might be more effectual—by blockading the coasts of Brazil and Cuba for breach of treaty stipulations, in the way Lord Palmerston has blockaded the Piræus on behalf of Mr. Finlay and Don David Pacifico. Can we be told why that course is not adopted? Is it not because that would interfere with trade—with the "pounds, shillings, and pence" of British merchants; with the industry which is fed by the smuggled slave-trade? Is the reason for not adopting that course, of transferring the blockade to the American in lieu of the African coast, simply this—that *it would be effectual*?

Not to multiply instances of the reasons which guide this vital policy of Lord John's Cabinet, we will cite only one more,—that upon this, the policy of the Whig Cabinet, there is the blessing of God; and that by reversing the policy, this country would lose the blessing of God and the prosperity by Divine goodness vouchsafed!!!

Now we see why Mr. Sheil struck out the words "Dei gratia" from Queen Victoria's newest coin: it is not Victoria, but Lord John Russell, that reigns by the grace of God. "Non noster hic sermo;" it is Lord John's own proclamation.

"It was not as a member of the Government" that Mr. Labouchere "felt anxious to oppose this question:" Lord John having previously summoned a meeting of Liberal Members, and told them that if they did not oppose "this question" he would resign.

It is by such penalties that the policy is forced upon Parliament and the country; if we do not persevere in this Cabinet policy, which fails in all it professes and brings about only what it repudiates,—this costly failure, this deadly farce,—the country will lose its Premier, and with

him the blessing of God, for that exclusively accompanies the policy on which Lord John's Cabinet stakes its existence.—*March 23.*

We might have added to the foregoing leaders others from the *Morning Advertiser*, the *Evening Sun*, &c., in favour of Mr. Hutt's motion, but our space forbids; we therefore turn to the most important articles which have appeared in other papers against the motion. From these our readers will gather the points most relied upon in defence of the African squadron:—

(*Patriot.*)

One significant feature of the debate on Mr. Hutt's motion for establishing a free-trade in slaves, has been kept out of sight in the comments of the daily journals; namely, that, of the honourable members who opposed the motion, and disputed Mr. Hutt's unscrupulous allegations, three were members of his own committee; and, as such, were in perfect possession of all the evidence upon which the report carried by the chairman's casting vote ostensibly rested. These were, Sir Robert Inglis, Mr. Cardwell, and Colonel Thompson, gentlemen belonging to three different political parties, and not one of them a ministerialist. Two others, Sir E. N. Buxton and Admiral Bowles, voted in the majority.

Sir Robert Inglis, referring to the grandiloquent tone in which the honourable member for Gateshead had referred to the decisions of his committee, said, it was almost ludicrous to find the number of resolutions that were decided by his own casting vote as chairman. The report itself, let it be recollected, was not simply disapproved of by seven members of the committee, and carried against them by Mr. Hutt's casting vote, but it was substituted for what they deemed the only proper conclusion to be drawn from the examination; and we have shown, by an elaborate analysis, that it is in fact as much at variance with the object for which the committee was appointed, as with the testimony of almost all the witnesses. Having been appointed, as Lord John Russell remarked, "to consider the best means which England could adopt for the final extinction of the slave-trade," they "seemed" (as regards the majority) "to have no other object in view, than the extinction of those means which already exist, in order that the traffic might be kept alive and nourished." That this was, indeed, the real object of Mr. Hutt and his immediate colleagues, is clear from their own language. Mr. Baillie, the seconder of his motion, boldly asserted, that, "where free-trade is triumphant, the slave-trade must, from the force of circumstances, be henceforth free." And this revolting sentiment was *cheered*! Mr. Gladstone did his best to mystify the object of the motion, and to disguise its real intention. But Lord John Russell, in reply, observed, that it was not worth while for the right honourable gentleman to put forward his excuses, since both the mover himself and those who had followed him, did not conceal, that the object of this preliminary step was, to restore the slave-trade, and, as the honourable gentleman who seconded the motion called it, *a free trade in slaves for the future*. "It is *that* motion, Sir," added the noble lord, "which I am about to meet: it is that motion which I am about to ask the House not to sanction." The plain-spoken audacity of the mover and the seconder almost excites one's respect, in comparison with the dishonest apology of their more artful confederate. But it is not in the nature of things, that plausibility should be given to pleadings in favour of the curse and crime of man-stealing and piracy, except at the cost of truth. And we are prepared to show, that not a single argument has been adduced in favour of Mr. Hutt's motion, that does not involve or rest upon misrepresentations pertinaciously reiterated in the teeth of evidence.

For instance; take *the Cost of the Squadron*, upon which the *Times* is particularly eloquent. The *Daily News*, indeed, aware that this argument will not bear examination, says: "We, at least, have never put it (the withdrawal) mainly on the ground of economy; *that* we have left for the *Times* foolishly to do. The western coast of Africa is one of those quarters of the globe where, irrespectively of our slave-trade policy, it will always be necessary to keep up a considerable naval force; for our trade there is subjected to a rude and sometimes (as Portendic and other French outrages testify) to a violent rivalry; and, if that coast were wholly unwatched, it is more than probable that it would be again infested with pirates. The *Chronicle*, nevertheless, affecting to doubt whether the squadron is really wanted on the African coast for commercial purposes,—in the teeth of Sir Charles Hotham's strong and decisive testimony on this point—says: "If it is wanted, nobody will object to maintaining one; but, it is sheer hypocrisy to disguise a mercantile and political aim under a philanthropic pretext: and it would be little short of insanity to keep up the machinery of a blockade, when our object is merely to protect our commerce." The charge of hypocrisy comes with peculiarly ill grace from a writer who is guilty, in the same sentence, of the triple crime of simulating a doubt which he cannot entertain, of imputing a mercantile and political aim to those who object to a free trade in human beings, and of representing as insanity the policy which every competent witness allows to be absolutely necessary for the protection of our legitimate commerce. The simple question relates to the withdrawal of the cruisers, improperly styled, "the machinery of a blockade." Our opponents constantly assume that this squadron is maintained simply

to please the Exeter-hall philanthropists, and for no useful purpose whatever; and they charge the whole cost of the cruisers to this account. When it is shown that, even apart from the forcible repression of the slave-trade, the cruisers would still be necessary, and that the cost of the squadron is not, therefore, incurred merely for philanthropic objects, are we to be told that this plea is disingenuous, irrelevant, hypocritical? "The utility or inutility of the squadron," quoth the *Chronicle*, "is a question by itself." We had supposed it to be *the* question. So Sir Charles Hotham seems to have viewed it, when he said (in reply to Question 670), "I do not think we can suspend our operations on the coast of Africa, without proposing some other measure; and at all events, we must reserve a squadron of from ten to twelve sail for the sake of protecting our commerce." And again, (at 680), "If you were to remove all restrictions, and to take your squadron entirely away, small speculators would spring up and undersell those who are now in the market; the slave-trade would be greatly increased in its horrors; and it would be impossible to calculate the calamities which would ensue. Besides this, pirates would abound, and, in my opinion, it would be impossible for a legitimate trader to conduct his operations upon that coast." This, according to the *Chronicle*, is sheer hypocrisy and insanity; and the insane hypocrite is Sir Charles Hotham,—the Sir Charles Hotham whom Mr. Hutt eulogised as "better qualified to judge of the merits of the question than any living man," and of whom Mr. Gladstone, with surpassing effrontery, said, he believed that, if a member of that House, would be amongst the most zealous supporters of the motion for withdrawing the squadron! The right honourable gentleman had heard Sir Charles make the declarations above cited, with other equally strong expressions to the same effect; and yet he durst hazard this astounding assertion! Of the witnesses examined by the Committee of which the right honourable gentleman was a member, forty-one witnesses to eight were in favour of continuing the squadron. Nevertheless, the *Chronicle* (following Mr. Gladstone in his dishonest tactics) declares, that the negative has been established "by the deliberate testimony of naval officers who have had the best means of forming a correct and unbiassed judgment," and that "the abandonment of the system, whether with or without a substitute, can no longer be a matter of rational controversy;" capping this enormous and profligate assertion with the insolent taunt, that this "is felt, though not avowed."

But now as to the actual cost. Sir Robert Inglis observed, that it is curious to trace the progress of a sum as it passes from member to member! "Last year, it was constantly asserted, that the cost of maintaining the squadron on the African coast, was £500,000. This year, the honourable member for Gateshead had raised the number of 'men in buckram,' and he now said it was £700,000. But the honourable and learned gentleman (Mr. Anstey) was not content with £700,000, and made it £1,000,000 sterling. How did these assertions tally with the returns furnished by the Admiralty? He found it there stated, that the cost of the blockading squadron, in the year 1846-7, was £301,623, including wear and tear of the hulls, machinery, &c. This discovery would, no doubt, be satisfactory to those who had exhibited this new love of economy, although he would not have them forget, that a reduction of expenditure to the amount he had quoted, could not be effected. All the reduction that could be achieved would be, the difference between maintaining twenty-four ships and twelve; the latter number being confessedly necessary to maintain the lawful trade in that corner." Mr. Labouchere also remarked, "that, when Mr. Hutt said that £700,000 would be saved by abandoning the African squadron, he must have made that statement on the presumption that no English ship of war was to sail on the African or American seas; and if so, what was to become of the commerce of this country!" But now comes the *Times* with its "foolish" economy, and, regardless of the exposure made in the House of the scandalous exaggeration, exclaims: "The idea! that we are to levy a million each year upon the British tax-payer, in order to make the slave in the Brazils a precious and well-treated commodity. Well might one exclaim, that such charity ought to begin at home and expend itself on the bogs of Connaught!" Again, hear this veracious journal on Wednesday:—"A large proportion of our fleet—a fourth, it is said—is employed on this interminable fool's errand in the tropics, without the least benefit whatever, but a great deal of harm. A million a year is a low estimate of the expense. By the admission of the philanthropists, as expressed in the amendment placed on the notice-paper, not only is that expenditure quite thrown away, but it involves the dire contingency of 'remonstrances with other powers, consistent with the character of this country.' So it is out of the question to talk of reducing our fleet under these circumstances. This one monster waste swallows up all our savings. It is a mere farce to cut down the salaries of poor little officials, and do other ignominious cheese-paring, flint-skinning sort of work, if all the while we are playing at pitch and toss with a million at a time!" We leave our readers to characterise such attempts as these to impose upon the ignorance of an incurious public. But how many honourable members content themselves with taking their opinions and their information, ready-made, from the *Times*!

We have selected this question of *Cost*, simply as affording one illus-

tration of the tactics of the opponents of the squadron; but it is only a specimen. The real quarrel of Mr. Hutt and his party with the cruising-system, which they pretend to be not worth a straw, on account of its inefficiency, is, because it is found *too efficient* for their purpose. They dread its being rendered more efficient by the adoption of the measures recommended by the naval officers who gave evidence before the Committee; and, while they taunt Government with not having adopted other measures for the suppression of the slave-trade, there is not a single collateral measure, or any substitute for the present system, to which they are not prepared (as is plain from Mr. Gladstone's speech) to offer the same determined opposition. That the philanthropists of Exeter-hall or the members of the old anti-slavery party ever relied upon the preventive force for the extinction of the slave-trade, apart from other measures, is a fiction and a calumny. One beneficial result of this memorable debate will be, we trust, to impress upon the noble lord at the head of the Government the necessity of directing his earnest and immediate attention to the valuable suggestions submitted to the Slave-trade Committees by Dr. Lushington, Captain Denman, Sir George Stephen, Captain Beacroft, Mr. M'Queen, and others. We entertain the firm conviction, that the squadron might, so far as regards the slave-trade, be superseded by the following out of those suggestions, in three or four years,—superseded by the substitution of a legitimate trade for a contraband traffic in human beings, which Mr. Hutt desires only to have made a free trade.—*March 25.*

(*Globe.*)

The House of Commons was last night saved from doing a very foolish, and, if we are to take the word of Mr. Baillie, a very wicked thing. Mr. Hutt, the chairman of the Committee which had been appointed, in 1848 and 1849, to consider the best means for the extinction of the slave-trade, brought forward the result of his labours in a formal motion. This motion professed to embody the joint opinion of the Committee. Mr. Hutt could hit upon no better means of extinguishing the trade, than to leave off trying to do so at all—or, as he put it last night, to take steps to induce foreign nations to relieve us from our treaty obligations to that effect. But, as we have said, his seconder, Mr. Baillie, spoke more plainly. He told the House that it was virtually a motion for "free-trade in slaves," and wound up with a condolence addressed to the Anti-slavery Society for this termination to their philanthropic exertions. It is unnecessary to say that it would be unfair to take this language as an expression of feeling common to the whole House. It is obviously such as none but a person equally inhuman and indiscreet would think of using. The real danger that last night threatened the cause of progressive negro emancipation was couched in very different forms. We were told that our squadron on the coast of Africa was inefficient for its object, and that, at any rate, our expenditure on this head was ridiculously inconsistent with the rest of our commercial policy. The former point may be at once disposed of by a reference to Mr. Hutt's own figures—which, mere guesses as they are, are at all events good against him. It appears by these that, in 1839, no fewer than 135,800 slaves were imported into Brazil and Cuba. In 1847, the last year for which we have any returns, the number was 84,356. Here we have a clear diminution of more than 50,000 Africans annually redeemed from slavery. On the other point we must speak at some greater length.

Suppose that in some such season of anarchy as even in modern times has visited Continental States, the inhabitants of any one English county were able to steal steam-engines and thus prosecute their industry at a cheaper rate than was possible to their neighbours. Would it be any inconsistency for the Government to prohibit the use of these ill-gotten instruments of production, and at the same time to express its sincere desire to stimulate the general progress of English manufactures? Would there be any inconsistency even if it was a department of France that obtained this fraudulent advantage, and if England was at once anxious for every development of French industry, and determined nevertheless to do all in her power towards abolishing such a system of organised pillage as we have imagined? This is precisely our present position towards Brazil. In common with every manufacturing nation we have a high pecuniary interest in bringing into cultivation the rich virgin soil of the South American Continent. But, on the other side, it is clearly the interest of humanity that this cultivation should not be brought about through the barbarous instrumentality of imported slaves. Is there any inconsistency in our declaring that deeply as we value our increasing commerce with Brazil,—zealous as we are to leave no legitimate means untried that can operate its extension, we are nevertheless sternly determined to debar ourselves from whatever portion of that extension depends on the continuance of slave labour? Some politicians have attempted to realise this view by laying heavy duties on slave-grown sugar. Lord John Russell's Cabinet, impressed with the manifold and unnecessary inconveniences to which such arrangements (even if they attained their professed end, which they do not) would subject commerce, have preferred to strike directly at the root of the slave-trade. If there is any inconsistency in this policy, we may be permitted to say that it extends to all who are anxious for the progress of Brazilian industry, and who yet profess to dislike the slave-trade. If the Government is inconsistent in

wishing for the end, and yet attacking one of the methods of reaching it, those reasoners are not less inconsistent who confine their hostility to words. Few English politicians (except, perhaps, Mr. Hume) would nakedly declare that they have no desire to see the slave-trade finally abolished. But if a wish to see Brazil rich and prosperous logically involves a readiness to withdraw a squadron which interferes with this consummation, it must also logically involve a dislike to missionary societies, to all attempts at guarding the Brazilian instead of the African coast, and, in short, to the various schemes hitherto set afloat in the interest of the negro race. We shall be curious to see if those who accuse Lord John Russell of inconsistency, are prepared to carry their own consistency to this length?

It is no secret that the arguments, such as they were, for the withdrawal of our squadron, had been so perseveringly circulated among the House of Commons, that Mr. Hutt's motion was only rejected by a very vigorous exertion of the ministerial whip. Some of our contemporaries have expressed a good deal of discontent at this result; but, for our own part, we are heartily glad to see any steps towards arresting the gradual dissolution of the House of Commons into a multitude of capricious and interested cabals.—*March 20.*

We have been reluctantly compelled, through want of space, to defer the article from the *Morning Post*, which we had intended to insert in our present number.

The Anti-Slavery Reporter.

LONDON, MONDAY, APRIL the 1st, 1850.

The *Reporter* for the present month will be found to contain a large amount of information relative to the debate on Mr. Hutt's motion for the withdrawal of the African squadron. We have so repeatedly expressed our opinion on this important subject, that we need not trouble our readers further, either with the facts or arguments in favour of its withdrawal, than to say that nothing in the course of the last debate has altered our opinion of the inutility of continuing an armed crusade against the slave-trade, which brings the country neither honour nor success. Yet, strongly as we advocate the withdrawal of the cruisers, as a means of suppressing the slave-trade, we neither did nor could support Mr. Hutt's motion. He went far beyond the mere withdrawal of the cruisers; and the effect of his motion, had it been successful, would have been to liberate Brazil and Spain from all treaty obligations to this country to suppress the inhuman traffic, and to give freedom to that vast multitude of Africans who have been illicitly imported into their territories and colonies, and who are illegally held in slavery at the present moment. We were not prepared for this; we are not willing, and never will consent, to give up one iota of our claims on those countries for the exact fulfilment of their treaties; and are prepared to enforce our rights in every legitimate, pacific, and practicable form, and they are many. We can, for instance, refuse all diplomatic intercourse with Brazil and Spain until they have honourably discharged their duty to this country; we can exclude their produce from the British markets until slavery, the root of the slave-trade, be utterly abolished; we can appeal to every power in league with us for the extinction of the slave-trade to follow our example; and bring the public opinion of Christendom to bear upon them with such force as to compel them to do justice, or be cut off from the privileges and immunities enjoyed by the great commonwealth of nations. But whilst Mr. Hutt intended to relieve them from all obligation to respect their treaties, he presented no substitute, he developed no plan by which the slave-trade might be effectually suppressed. Had he a plan? It was intimated that he had. Why did he not produce it? Could he have selected a better opportunity, or expected a more willing auditory than were presented to him on the night of the debate? Any scheme, which contained the elements of success within it, would have been hailed with gratitude by the country, and the hon. gentleman would have been regarded as the benefactor of his race had he produced it. In consequence of his silence in the House on this important point, we have been induced to refer to the resolutions drafted by him, as Chairman of the Select Committee on the Slave-trade, and there we find a scheme elaborated by him for superseding the slave-trade, as at present carried on, but which, in effect, would be an extension of the same great evil, under a new name. In the 17th, 18th, and 19th resolutions of Mr. Hutt, we find him stating, "That so long as there shall co-exist in Cuba and Brazil a great demand for tropical productions and large tracts of uncultivated and fertile land, with an insufficiency of labour, it will be extremely difficult,

if not practically impossible, to prevent the importation into those countries of labour from Africa." Having laid down this proposition, he then goes on to say, "that it is of the highest importance to the interests of humanity, that the demand for labour in Cuba and Brazil should be supplied by free emigration from Africa, rather than by the slave-trade;" and he adds, "that there is ground to hope that the Governments of Cuba and Brazil would not be unwilling to convert the supply of labour now furnished by the slave-trade into a free emigration, under provident and humane regulations." As an equivalent for this "free emigration from Africa" to Brazil and Cuba, Mr. Hutt would extend the same thing to the British emancipated colonies, and thus re-open the slave-trade, modified in name and form, only, for the benefit of Brazilian, Cuban, and British planters,—for if, on this question, there be one thing more clearly demonstrated than another, it is this, that no free labourers can be procured from Africa; and that, to supply any amount of labour from that continent, it is necessary that slave hunts, with all their bloody and brutal accompaniments, should continue, and that the price should be as regularly paid for the African, under Mr. Hutt's scheme, as it is paid now. Unless we are prepared to increase and aggravate the internal African slave-trade, this plan of supplying Brazil and Cuba, and the British colonies with Africans, must be met with a decided negative. The hope cherished by Mr. Hutt, that "the Governments of Cuba and Brazil would not be unwilling to convert the supply of labour now furnished by the slave-trade into a free emigration," is simply ridiculous. No African obtained under the circumstances proposed would be free, and once on the plantations or in the mines of those countries, farewell to his personal liberty, notwithstanding the "provident and humane regulations" suggested. Mr. Hutt is a perfect master in the art of using soft phrases to smooth the way for the adoption of his plans, but we respectfully tell him that they can impose on none but the ignorant or uninitiated.

The substitute which the Anti-slavery Committee suggested for the withdrawal of the cruisers will be found embodied in the prayer of the petition presented to the House of Commons on the 19th ult., and which, we believe, if acted upon, would be found an efficient one. It is as follows:—

To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled.

The Petition of the Committee of the British and Foreign Anti-slavery Society,

SHewETH,—That your Petitioners are deeply concerned to learn that the foreign African slave-trade is still carried on to an enormous extent, and with aggravated atrocity and horror, to supply the slave markets of Brazil and the Spanish colonies:

That your Petitioners attribute this fearful state of things to the continued bad faith of the Brazilian and Spanish Governments, who, in defiance of the solemn obligations of treaties entered into with this country, have for a long series of years allowed it to be openly and flagrantly carried on:

That in consequence of the dishonourable violation of the said treaties by Brazil and Spain, this country has incurred an expenditure of many millions of its treasure, in addition to the large sums of money originally paid for them, in protracted efforts to suppress this inhuman and revolting traffic, but hitherto without effect:

That your Petitioners deeply lament the passing of the Sugar Act of 1846, by which that nefarious traffic has been greatly stimulated and increased; and the consistent testimony of the country against it, unhappily, to a great extent, neutralised; and that its further effect has been to render the overthrow of slavery in the Brazilian Empire and the Spanish colonies more difficult of attainment than at any former period:

That, inasmuch as every treaty with a foreign power necessarily implies the means to enforce its stipulations, your Petitioners respectfully entreat your honourable House to agree to an Address to Her Majesty, requesting Her Majesty will forthwith give instructions to the principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to demand of the Brazilian and Spanish Governments the liberation from slavery of all Africans, with their descendants, who have been illicitly imported into their several territories and colonies, contrary to the stipulations of treaties and their own laws; and that, as the non-fulfilment of the treaties for the suppression of the slave-trade is to be attributed to the bad faith of Brazil and Spain, a further demand be made on them for the repayment of all monies disbursed by this country, in consideration of the said treaties, or expended in the suppression of the traffic in slaves, carried on by those countries, so far as it can be ascertained; and that, in the event of their attempting either to

evade these demands, or to procrastinate their strict fulfilment, it be notified to them that their produce will be excluded from the British markets until such time as slavery itself shall be abolished by them.

With the views we entertain of Mr. Hutt's motion, as a whole, we cannot regret that it was defeated; at the same time we think that the majority of the House, to be consistent with the principle they have affirmed, are bound to use the force hitherto employed on the coast of Africa, in the suppression of the slave-trade, in a more efficient manner, in order to secure that end. They ought, at once, to raise the African blockade, and employ the squadron in blockading the ports of Havana, Matanzas, and St. Jago da Cuba, and the harbours of Rio de Janeiro, Bahia, and Pernambuco. The blow struck in any of these quarters would be more effective than in any other direction; and, at all events, would prove the sincerity of their determination to put down the hateful traffic. Do they shrink from such an application of the moral force of this country? Why, we must leave them to answer.

It must not be supposed that we view the course which the Government have pursued with satisfaction. They find fault with Mr. Hutt for not indicating a substitute for the squadron, whilst, admitting themselves the failure of the squadron, they propose no substitute, nor even an efficient auxiliary to its operations. The fact is, they have embarrassed themselves by the application of free-trade principles to slave-trade produce; and they know not how to secure, at one and the same time, the suppression of the slave-trade, and an extensive commerce with the countries which carry it on. How marvellous their inconsistency! They send their cruisers, at an immense cost of men and money, to the coast of Africa to suppress the traffic; and they open the markets of this country to the reception of the blood-stained produce on which that traffic depends. Eloquent and Christian as was the peroration of Lord John Russell's speech at the close of the debate, we were compelled to confront with it the Sugar Act of 1846, which doubled the slave-trade, and to ask ourselves how it could be made to harmonise with that appalling fact. If the Government be sincerely desirous of destroying "the curse and crime of slavery," and of maintaining the lead in the championship of this great question of freedom and humanity to the people of this country, let them put the brand of public reprobation on the productions of slavery, and use all other means a great and Christian country can properly employ in its extinction, and they may reasonably expect the continuance of the Divine mercies, and the blessings of mankind at large; but if they will persist in sacrificing the highest interests of humanity to the exigencies of commerce—if they will continue to prefer the prosperity of Manchester and Birmingham to the freedom and civilisation of Africa—then it requires no prophetic vision to declare, that to this country will not be reserved the honour of securing the triumph of freedom over slavery; and that it would be sheer presumption for it to expect the benediction of Heaven.

We beg to call the especial attention of our readers to the first and last articles in the present number of the *Reporter*, relating to a new scheme of immigration which it is proposed, by the aid of monies advanced by the British treasury, to carry into effect in British Guiana. The facts embodied in the memorial to Lord Grey, and the principles developed in the proceedings of the Court of Policy, must show the most incredulous that nothing will satisfy the dominant party in that colony, but the re-establishment of slavery for a period of time, at the public expense. We have now before us the three journals of that colony, and what do we gather from them? The *Royal Gazette*, the official paper, after having reviewed the results of immigration, in relation to the staple productions of the colony, says that "unquestionable facts tell us, in characters too plain to be mistaken, that immigration has failed, or rather that, in spite of it, the colony has sunk lower and lower from the sunny eminence of agricultural prosperity on which it stood some short fifteen years since;" and adds, "what has been ever will be under the same conditions." The *Colonist*, referring to the same subject, observes, "It would be an abuse of language to call it a system in which immigration has heretofore been carried on. Its policy was in the spirit of the advice given by an old rogue to his son, 'Get money, boy!—honestly if you can—but get money!' 'Get immigrants wisely if you can—but get immigrants!'" In these two extracts we have an emphatic condemnation of the whole scheme of immigration, as hitherto

carried on; and looked at in its bearing on the general interests of the community at large, it is worse than a failure. A reckless expenditure of the public money on foreign labourers, has been followed by a large reduction in the amount of produce raised, and has entailed liabilities on the colony which it is not probable it will be able to pay off. Finding it to be impossible to concoct a scheme of immigration which shall secure personal liberty, on the one hand, to the immigrant, and continuous labour, on the other, to the planter, it is now proposed that personal rights shall be taken away for such a period as shall be deemed necessary to secure the interests of the latter. The *Berbice Gazette* says—"When the subject of immigration was first canvassed in the colony, some five or six years since, a certain class of colonists objected to the scheme by saying there was enough, or nearly enough of labour power in the colony, if only the parties requiring it knew how to draw it out, or 'bring it out,' that was the phrase." After examining this point at large, and showing that the "management of the people" had been overlooked, it says—"We are quite prepared to hear much about the perversity, doggedness, indolence, &c., of the people, and, sooth to say, as willing to believe almost as much; but, after making all due allowance for these drawbacks, the fact remains that, with a ready and punctual payment, the fault is the manager's, if the estate in question be not in as favourable a condition and prospects as the produce market will admit of." In these remarks, we have the philosophy of the labour question in Guiana fairly brought out. We are satisfied that had proper pains been taken to secure the confidence of the emancipated classes, not even in Guiana would it have been necessary to have imported a single African, or Coolie, at the public expense. Of course, every effort must now be made to prevent the new scheme of immigration from taking effect.

LADIES' MEMORIAL TO THE QUEEN,

ON THE SUBJECT OF SLAVERY AND THE SLAVE-TRADE, AND THE DISUSE OF SLAVE-LABOUR PRODUCE.

The Committee who have had the chief charge of the Address to the Queen on the subject of slavery, and the promotion of the use of free-labour produce, take the earliest opportunity of acquainting all those who have co-operated in their work, that the petition has been laid before the Queen—it contained at its close 59,686 signatures.

The official acknowledgment has not yet been received. In the meantime, it may be interesting to their friends to know what steps the Committee have taken in connection with its presentation, as shown in the following letter addressed to Sir George Grey:—

"The Secretaries of 'The Ladies' Negro's Friend Society' beg respectfully to inform Sir George Grey, that they have under their charge an address to the Queen from her Majesty's female subjects of Great Britain, relating to slavery, and the increase of the slave-trade of Brazil and Cuba.

"The Address is numerously signed, having more than 58,000 names attached to it, contributed from most of the counties of England, and from many parts of Scotland.

"While the Ladies' Committee would confide in Sir George Grey's interest in this subject, for giving due weight to the character of this petition in its presentation, they have, from the commencement of their arduous work, cherished a hope that it might be laid before the Queen under such attendant circumstances as would give prominence and influence to the objects they have in view. The Rev. Alexander Crummell, an Episcopalian clergyman, of African descent, now studying at the University of Cambridge, having rendered important service at several meetings held to promote the Address, the Ladies' Committee would be glad to learn, if that gentleman, and another of his countrymen, of high character and standing, might be permitted to accompany the petition at the time it is presented to the Queen. This mode of presentation has been suggested to the Ladies' Committee by their correspondents in different parts of the country, and, it is conceived, would materially advance the cause of emancipation in America; for so emphatic a recognition of the social rights of the negroes, by the admission of their representatives to the presence of the highest personage of the realm, could not fail to have a powerful effect where such rights are denied them. Should this view of the subject be favourably received by Sir George Grey, and could be communicated by him to the Queen, the Ladies' Committee would confidently hope, that, for so important an end, her Majesty would graciously accede to their wishes."

Sir George Grey stated, in answer to this letter, that the rules observed on such occasions would not admit of the request being granted, but promised at the same time that he would forward a copy of the petition to the Queen, and call the particular attention of her Majesty to the contents of the foregoing letter.

Parliamentary Intelligence.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.—March 19th.

THE AFRICAN SQUADRON.

Sir R. INGLIS presented a petition from the Church Missionary Society, praying that the squadron now stationed on the coast of Africa for the suppression of the slave-trade should not be removed.

Mr. HEALD presented a petition from the committee of the Wesleyan Missionary Society to the same effect.

Sir E. BUXTON also presented petitions from Jamaica, St. Ives, Saffron Walden, Norwood, Ware, and other places, in favour of the enforcement of existing treaties between Brazil and Spain.

Mr. MOFFATT presented a similar petition from the Anti-slavery Society at Exeter.

Mr. HUTT then rose to bring before the House the motion of which he had given notice on this subject, and said, that the time had at last arrived when, in accordance with the reports of two committees of that House, appointed to consider the best means which Great Britain could adopt for providing for the final extinction of the slave-trade, it became his duty to submit a motion to the House upon that grave and important subject. The motion to which he called their attention was, in effect, that it was expedient for this country to desist from all acts for suppressing the slave-trade by force of arms. To carry out that declaration, it was, in the first instance, necessary that this country should be released from all its treaties and engagements which provided for the maintenance of the African squadron. A conviction of the expediency of adopting such a course, was strongly impressed upon the minds of the majority of both committees of which he was the chairman. Having thus endeavoured to free the report of the committee from some of those prejudices which it had been the effort of some parties to raise against it, he would proceed to state to the House those facts and circumstances which, in the opinion of the committee, justified that report. It was now thirty-one years since Great Britain, having negotiated various treaties with foreign States, despatched to the coast of Africa armed vessels to carry the object of those treaties into execution. Then began that memorable blockade of the coast of Africa, the true character of which, as well as the circumstance of its final abandonment, had yet to be written in our history. They had no sooner taken measures for the suppression of the slave-trade than that trade began to increase. Up to 1815 the highest amount of persons exported as slaves from the coast of Africa was 90,000; in 1819 it had amounted to 105,000, and the numbers continued to increase under circumstances of aggravated atrocity. Such, indeed, was the progress of the slave-trade that the Duke of Wellington, as British Minister at the Congress of Verona, acting under the direction of Mr. Canning, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, laid before the assembled Ministers and representatives of the States of Europe a memorandum, to one part of which he would presume to call the particular attention of the House. In his (Mr. Hutt's) opinion this memorandum deserved the utmost consideration, for the language it employed and the description which it gave of the slave-trade under the influence of our measures of suppression, was the language and description which any eloquent person who might now speak on the subject would apply to the present state of that trade. The extract from the memorandum, submitted by the Duke of Wellington to the Congress of Verona, on the 24th of November, 1822, ran thus:—

"I have the means of proving that the slave-trade has been, since the year 1815, and now is, carried on to a greater extent than it has been at any former period. This contraband trade is attended by circumstances much more horrible than anything that has ever been known to former times. It is not necessary here to enumerate the horrors respecting it, but it cannot be denied that all the attempts at prevention have tended to increase the aggregate of human suffering, and the waste of human life, in a ratio far exceeding the increase of positive numbers carried off into slavery. The dread of detection suggests expedients of concealment productive of the most dreadful sufferings to the cargo. The numbers put on board each vessel are far from being proportioned to the capacity of the vessels, and the mortality is frightful to a degree unknown since the attention of mankind was first called to the horrors of this traffic. There is no hesitation in declaring that it would have been far more consoling to humanity, and that by far a smaller number of human beings would have lost their lives by lingering and cruel suffering, if the trade had never been abolished by the laws of any country."

Such was the description of the slave traffic under blockade, solemnly addressed to the States of Europe by two of the first men of our age and country—Mr. Canning and the Duke of Wellington—and at a time when the slave-trade had certainly not assumed all the horrible characters which now belonged to it. Some efforts were accordingly made to continue the work of suppression, and for fifteen or sixteen years afterwards Great Britain made every necessary attempt to accomplish that object by strengthening her naval force. Measures were taken for increasing the number of our officers on the coast of Africa. By-and-by steam boats were added to the sailing vessels;—powers were obtained from almost all the States of Europe, enabling British cruisers to visit and search suspected vessels on the high seas,—vessels presumed to be equipped for the slave-trade were made the objects of seizure, and were all broken up. Brazil, Portugal, and Spain were placed under the influence of more rigid treaties; and, indeed, no measure of coercion that could suggest itself to the enthusiasm of Exeter-hall, or the ability of the Foreign-office, was overlooked on our part. Well, what was the result of all this industry, and of all this exertion? He had read the description given by the Duke of Wellington of the state of the slave-trade and our influence on its suppression up to the year 1822. In 1839, Lord John Russell, then Secretary for the Colonies, addressed a letter to the Lords of the Treasury, in which he found this passage:—

"The state of the foreign slave-trade has, for some time past, engaged much of the attention of Her Majesty's confidential advisers. In whatever light this traffic is viewed, it must be regarded as an evil of incalculable magnitude; the injuries it inflicts on the lawful commerce of this country, the constant expense incurred in the employment of ships of war for the suppression of it, and the annual sacrifice of so many valuable lives in this service, however deeply to be lamented, are not the most disastrous results of this system. The honour of the British Crown is compromised by the habitual evasion of the treaties subsisting between her Majesty and foreign powers for the abolition of the slave-trade, and the calamities which, in defiance of religion, humanity, and justice, are inflicted on a large proportion of the African continent, are such as cannot be contemplated without

the deepest and most lively concern. To estimate the actual extent of the foreign slave-trade is, from the nature of the case, an attempt of extreme difficulty; nor can anything more than a general approximation to the truth be made. But I find it impossible to avoid the conclusion, that the average number of slaves introduced into foreign States or colonies in America and the West Indies, from the western coast of Africa, annually exceeds 100,000."

The noble lord took the western coast of Africa only, and the average number. It continued—

"In this estimate a very large deduction is made for the exaggerations which are more or less inseparable from all statements on a subject so well calculated to excite the feelings of every impartial and disinterested witness. But, making this deduction, the number of slaves actually landed in the importing countries affords but a very imperfect indication of the real extent of the calamities which this traffic inflicts on its victims. No record exists of the multitudes who perish in the overland journey to the African coast, or in the passage across the Atlantic, or of the still greater number who fall a sacrifice to the warfare, pillage, and cruelties by which the slave-trade is fed. Unhappily, however, no fact can be more certain, than that such an importation as I have mentioned presupposes and involves a waste of human life, and a sum of human misery, proceeding from year to year, without respite or intermission, to such an extent as to render the subject the most painful of any which, in the survey of the condition of mankind, it is possible to contemplate. The preceding statement unavoidably suggests the inquiry, why the costly efforts in which Great Britain has so long been engaged for repressing the foreign slave-trade have proved thus ineffectual? Without pausing to enumerate the many concurrent causes of failure, it may be sufficient to say that such is the difference between the price at which a slave is bought on the coast of Africa and the price for which he is sold in Brazil or Cuba, that the importer receives back his purchase-money tenfold, on the safe arrival of his vessel at the port of destination. We must add to this exciting motive the security which is derived from insurances and insurance companies, which are carried on to a great extent, and combined powerful interests. Under such circumstances, to repress the foreign slave-trade by a marine guard would scarcely be possible if the whole British navy could be employed for that purpose. It is an evil which can never be adequately encountered by any system of mere prohibition and penalties. Her Majesty's confidential advisers are therefore compelled to admit the conviction that it is indispensable to enter upon some new preventive system."

It was very true that those statements were made with a view to support the Niger expedition, but, as he was sure they were made in a spirit of sincerity and truth, all the general allegations and general facts brought forward must be of general application, and he did the noble lord no wrong in reading those passages, though they were disconnected from the subject of the Niger expedition. But that was not all. In the following year, 1840, a great assembly was held in Exeter-hall. His Royal Highness Prince Albert took the chair upon that occasion. He was supported by the noble lord at the head of the Government, by the right hon. baronet whom he saw opposite, by both the hon. members for the University of Oxford, by a perfect constellation of lords spiritual and temporal, by well-dressed ladies and gentlemen in thousands. He would ask the House to attend to the resolutions of that well-dressed and well-conducted assembly in Exeter-hall. The first resolution was moved by Sir F. Buxton, and seconded by the Archbishop of Canterbury, then Bishop of Chester:—"That, notwithstanding the measures hitherto adopted for the suppression of the foreign trade in slaves, the traffic has increased, and continues to increase under circumstances of aggravated horror." The second resolution was moved by Dr. Lushington, and seconded by Archdeacon Wilberforce, now the Bishop of Oxford, and chairman of the committee of the House of Lords:—"That the utter failure of every attempt by treaty, by remonstrance, and by naval armaments to arrest the progress of the slave-trade, proves the necessity of resorting to a preventive policy founded on different and higher principles." He said nothing stronger than that the committee of the House of Commons, of which he had the honour of being chairman, brought forward no allegation of a more stringent nature than that, either in regard to the extent of the slave-trade or the means of suppressing it. But surprised was he that the persons now undertaking to defend this system, then stood forward as its accusers. He now arrived at 1840. That year, and some subsequent years, were distinguished by a temporary but remarkable diminution of the slave-trade, and there were certain naval officers who were anxious to persuade the world that that diminution was caused by their presence on the coast of Africa. He certainly believed that Captain Denman and Captain Matson were most zealous and energetic officers; but when they claimed to themselves and their plans and performances the merit of greatly reducing the slave-trade at that period, he thought they were suffering, in some respect, under that delusion which led a parish sexton to believe that the piety and exemplary attendance on Divine worship in his parish, were entirely explained by the manner in which he tolled the church bell. It was very true that at that period Captain Denman was at his post, but there were other and far more powerful agencies at work. He saw near him the First Lord of the Admiralty, who, about that period, happened to be the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was sure the right hon. gentleman would remember, though other persons might have forgotten it, that the period to which he was now adverting was a period of great mercantile depression. That depression affected the slave-trade quite as much as the legitimate branches of commerce. That was one of the concurrent causes of the great diminution of the slave-trade at that period. But there was another of a very remarkable character. At that time both Cuba and Brazil were honestly engaged in an attempt to prevent the importation of slaves into those countries. Sir G. Ouseley, whose despatches at that time had some years after been laid on the table of the House, attributed the diminution in the country in which he was placed, mainly to the exertions made by the then Brazilian Minister of Marine—that most excellent man, Senor Cavalcanti. At the same period Cuba was governed by General Valdez. In 1843, General Valdez was removed, and at the same time the anti-slavery Ministry of Brazil went out of office. Commerce revived, and with that revival, notwithstanding the improved efficiency of our fleet, revived all the horrors of the slave-trade. In 1842 the number of slaves exported from Africa had sunk down to very nearly 30,000; in 1843 it rose to 55,000; in 1846 it was 76,000; in 1847 it was 84,000; and, though they had not been furnished with any public means of ascertaining the number in the last year, or the manner in which the slave-trade was now advancing, he had learnt, from such means as were open to him, that the slave-trade was last year, and is still, in a state of unusual activity; and, indeed, he found in a paper laid on the table of the House at the close of last year, some statements from persons well qualified to form a correct judgment, which went to justify that opinion. He held in his

hand a paper, called "A Mission to the King of Ashantee and Dahomey," containing a statement made by Mr. Cruickshank, in a letter written from Whydah, at the close of 1848. He said,—

"It is a distressing truth, that our present blockade is no check whatever to the slave-trade; it is flourishing at this moment to such a degree, that the last account from Brazil reports more than 8,000 slaves in the market there, without any purchaser; and not long ago a cargo of slaves arrived at the same place, which found such a bad market, that they were given up to pay freight. In presence of such facts as these, and the additional fact, that during the whole period that we have maintained cruisers on the coast the slave-trade has gone on uninterruptedly, we must be convinced of the futility of such a system; it appears to me to serve no other purpose than to increase the horrors of the traffic. In the first place, the certainty of losing a considerable portion, by capture, increases the slave merchants' orders for supply to the slave-hunting African kings, and so renders more frequent and incessant their cruel forays. In the next place, the precautions necessary to avoid the cruisers oblige the slavers to cram these miserable objects into the stifling holds of small vessels, where it is well known that thousands die from suffocation. In addition to this, I believe I may add, that it sometimes happens that the slave merchant has been more fortunate than he calculated upon, and that more of his slavers have escaped capture than he expected; he does not, therefore, require the additional lot of slaves who have been hunted down for him; so that they are left sometimes to starve in the hands of their captors, and sometimes are led forth to gratify them with their tortures. There can be no doubt but that much of this incredible suffering would be avoided if there were no cruisers."

Such, then, was the end we had arrived at, after a period of thirty years in which we had been engaged in this work of suppression. But there was one feature in the history of this suppression, which was well worthy of the attention of the House. Up to 1840 the slave-trade of Brazil was perfectly free. We could not then molest the slave-trade south of the Equator. Lord Palmerston said before the committee, which the right hon. gentleman would recollect, that up to the beginning of 1840 the importation of slaves into Brazil was practically unrestricted. At the beginning of 1840 we acquired the right to suppress the slave-trade south of the line, and we stationed our armed cruisers as they had since been placed; and what was the result? He asked not what was the temporary, but the permanent and real result of the change? It was perfectly true that our cruisers, by going among the slavers before they had learnt the art of smuggling, captured a great number of them. But what was the state of the slave-trade south of the line? It was going on with at least as much activity as ever, and, notwithstanding the presence or absence of our squadron, the importation of slaves into Brazil was "practically unrestricted," to use the words of the noble lord. Though opposed by the utmost vigilance and vigour of our squadron, no change whatever had been produced in the extent of the slave-trade. Nay, still further, it appeared that the importation of slaves into Brazil, during the last six or seven years, had actually overtaken the demand, stimulated as that demand had been by the acts of the British Parliament, by admitting Brazilian sugar into the markets of this country. That fact could not be questioned or denied. It was established before the Committee of that House, as hon. members of that Committee would recollect, and he found it confirmed by the statements of Lord Howden and other eminent persons, who appeared before the Committee of the House of Lords. He put those facts before the common sense of the House, and asked was it possible to believe that our squadron could be worth what it cost—that it was, in fact, worth a straw—when it was of no actual difference to the slave-trade whether it was employed or not, and when, notwithstanding the increased demand for the production of slave labour, slaves were cheaper in the markets of Brazil than when the slave-trade was unrestricted. There was another fact still? Up to 1840 the slave-trade was perfectly free for at least 1,000 miles south of the line. It might be supposed, that as our squadron was suppressing the slave-trade north of the line, the slave-traders would confine their operations to that part of the coast where they could carry on their business unmolested. Was that the fact? No such thing. They resorted, in defiance of our squadron, in vast numbers, to the very cruising-ground on which it was placed; and hon. members who had paid attention to the Blue Books on the table of the House would remark, that a large portion of the slave-trade to Brazil was actually carried on in the very teeth of our squadron. These were facts that could not be denied or gainsaid, and he asked what were they to think of the preventive merits of the squadron after that? And yet they had the statement of the Bishop of Oxford, gravely assuring them that the slave-trade was greatly reduced in amount, and the probable increase was prevented by our efforts—our efforts! He really wished they would soberly consider against what our efforts were directed. They were undertaking with the squadron to suppress a contraband trade, which offered to those engaged in it a larger gain than any other trade ever did in the world. It was of no use to say that this was an unholy or unchristian occupation. Unquestionably it was so; but what they had to consider was this, that being a lucrative trade, could they suppress it by force of arms? There was not an instance, in the history of the world, often as it had been tried, in which a lucrative trade, under such circumstances, was so arrested. It was stated by a great English writer, nearly 200 years ago, Sir Josiah Childs, and his wise observation was corroborated and confirmed by statesmen and political writers of succeeding times, that "he that will give a higher price for any commodity shall obtain it by something or other, for such is the force, fraud, and subtlety of the course of trade." It was a great consolation to him (Mr. Hutt), who had undertaken the arduous duty of impeaching our suppressive system, that in examining the evidence laid before Parliament, to know that the views he held, and which he had for years advocated in that House on this subject, were fully corroborated and supported by those who, from intimate knowledge of their application, were the best qualified to judge of their merits. The Committee examined a great variety of naval officers, travellers, merchants, missionaries, and other persons, and had elicited from them a great variety of conflicting and contradictory evidence. It was, however, to be observed, that many of those witnesses, and especially the missionaries, had no more knowledge of this slave-trade than if they never had quitted London; and, although generally they were strongly in favour of maintaining the squadron, of the operations of the squadron they had in their own persons no knowledge at all. Of the witnesses called, unquestionably the most important were the naval officers engaged on the African coast. The Committee had examined fourteen. Those who had the strongest hope of suppressing it were those who had not seen anything of the slave-trade for the last seven years. Captain Denman had no difficulty; he would put down the slave-trade in two years by a plan of his own. Captain Matson and

Captain Butterfield also believed in the final extinction by force within a limited period of time, although they were not so sanguine as Captain Denman; but none of those had been on the coast for the last seven or eight years. Captain Denman left in 1843, and since then the slave-trade has been going on, gradually improving its tactics, and sharpening its wits, and increasing all means of avoiding detection. The question is not whether the slave-trade can be put down by such plans as had been laid before the public by Captains Denman and Matson. The question was not whether the slave-trade could be put down then by such means, but whether the slave-trade could be so put down now; and he found the naval officers, of at least equal experience, and of almost equal sobriety and judgment as Captain Denman, state that no manner of managing the fleet, by cruising in shore or off—no burning of barracoons—no right of search—no plan proceeding on the principle of force, would ever succeed in putting down the slave-trade; and they had gone further, and thought the least means of success would be the adoption of Captain Denman's system. He had stated that of the witnesses the most valuable were the naval officers, but he was sure the feeling of the House would go with him when he said that of the naval officers the most important communications were made by the Commanders-in-Chief—those who had held the command of the African squadron. Of such officers three only now survived. The Committee examined two of those gentlemen, Captain Mansell and Sir C. Hotham. Captain Mansell was on the coast of Africa three years. He quitted the coast in 1848, and commanded the squadron during half the time he was on the coast. He was an officer of great intelligence, and of great personal distinction. What was his opinion on the question now before the House? He was asked—

"Looking to the extent of that coast, and to the facilities which the coast affords for the shipment of slaves, do you imagine that it would be possible, by any means of naval force, to suppress the slave-trade, so long as there existed a high demand for slaves on the other side of the Atlantic?—I am perfectly convinced that it would be impossible. Are you acquainted with the particular plan, for the suppression of the slave-trade, which has been proposed and strongly recommended by Captain Denman?—I know the general outline of the plan. Have you read the sketch of it which he submitted to the Admiralty?—Yes. Do you think that the vigorous enforcement of that system would effectually extinguish the slave-trade?—I cannot think that it would. Do you think that it would, to any important degree, diminish it?—I do not think it would. Are you of opinion, that though, by means of that system of blockade, some stations might be effectually restrained in regard to the slave-trade, the slave-trade would shift its quarters and break out elsewhere?—I entertain no doubt whatever of it."

At the end of 1846 Captain Mansell was succeeded by Sir C. Hotham. It was not for him to speak the praise of Sir C. Hotham, but this he might venture to say, and he had it from the late lamented First Lord of the Admiralty, that Sir C. Hotham was selected for the command, not on account of any personal or political interest, but entirely because he was, in the opinion of the Lords of the Admiralty, the fittest officer in the British service to undertake that delicate and important duty. Sir C. Hotham owed his appointment entirely to his personal qualifications; and, in command of the squadron, he displayed no deficiency of those high qualities by which he had acquired the distinction of being appointed to the command.

"Do you think that if it had been possible to stop the slave-trade by such means as were confided to Sir Charles Hotham, the slave-trade would have been stopped?—I am decidedly of that opinion."

Captain Denman told the committee that Sir Charles Hotham was the most distinguished of his standing in the British navy—a man every one looked up to. Sir C. Hotham was asked—

"Was that force in a high state of discipline, generally speaking?—I thought so. Were your views carried out by the officers under your command to your entire satisfaction?—Entirely so. What was the result of your operations; did you succeed in stopping the slave-trade?—No. Did you cripple it to such an extent as in your opinion is calculated to give to the slave-trade a permanent check?—No. Do you consider that the slave-trade has been generally regulated by the strength and efficiency of the British squadron on the coast, or by the commercial demand for slaves?—I consider it is entirely dependent upon the commercial demand for slaves, and has little or no connexion with the squadron. You think that the present system is open to many grave objections on other accounts, and that it will not succeed?—Experience has proved the present system to be futile."

Such was the opinion of a man whom he could not but believe was better qualified to judge of the merits of this question than any living man. He had laid before the House the opinion of Captain Mansell and of Sir C. Hotham. He had stated the opinion of a practical man, whose system found an opponent from another quarter, in a gentleman who had looked at this subject from an entirely different point of view, but whose opinions upon it were of themselves entitled to the greatest consideration. He meant the late Mr. Bandinel, of the Foreign-office. He had been for thirty years at the head of that department of the Foreign-office which was charged with the suppression of the slave-trade, and he came before the committee an old man, with all the moderation and reserve which forty-five years of official life are well calculated to impart to a mind naturally judicious and discreet. What was the opinion of this long-experienced and prudent public servant? He said the squadron had produced on the slave-trade no effect at all. The squadron was not able to diminish even the number of Africans demanded by the people of Brazil, they appeared to get as many as they wanted. He might from the same report quote other valuable opinions to show the house—he used the words of Dr. Lushington—that the squadron had not attained the end proposed in suppressing the slave-trade, or diminished its extent; but he was content to rest his case, as far as it depended on authority, upon the evidence of Captain Mansell and Sir C. Hotham, and the late Mr. Bandinel. He knew not, indeed, where they were to look for guidance or counsel, if a very considerable amount of deference were not given to opinions such as these. He could unaffectedly declare that he would mistrust any speculations of his own on the subject, if he found them opposed to authorities such as he had referred to. He came now to another part of the subject. We found, as we proceeded, that although the principle of force had a great many admirers, who still believed in the possibility of repressing the slave-trade by force, there was no one who thought the present application of the principle a satisfactory one. It was rather too much, that after the experience of thirty years, and after having spent £25,000,000 of money in promoting this particular system, the discovery should all at once be made that the system was bad and required the greatest modification. A notice had met his eye that morning of an amendment to his motion, which was to be made by his

hon. friend the member for North Derbyshire, who, belonging to that class which was strongly in favour of maintaining the principle of force for the suppression of the slave-trade, was, nevertheless, of opinion that the manner in which the principle was now applied was faulty. The hon. member said, "the thing won't do," but then he disliked his (Mr. Hutt's) proposition, and accordingly had come forward with a *contre-projet*. Now, in his hon. friend's amendment there was a great deal that was obscure, much that was mysterious, and not a little that was wholly obscure. Thus much, however, was quite clear—namely, that his hon. friend thought the present system required considerable alteration. Although his hon. friend did not very clearly explain the nature of the alterations which he desired to see effected, other persons had supplied the deficiency in his proposal. For instance, one naval captain had declared that he would undertake to put down the slave-trade, if Parliament would only triple the naval force upon the African coast. Another said that he could manage to do it with only forty ships—chiefly steam vessels—but then, he said, it would be necessary to make treaties with the African chiefs all along the coast, and to pay them handsome subsidies. A very respectable gentleman, the Chief Justice of Sierra Leone, Mr. Carr, thought that, if we furnished a force sufficient to watch closely the whole seaboard of both sides of the coast of Africa, and also changed the disposition of the native chiefs, there would be some chance of putting down the slave-trade. Lastly, there was the report of the Lords' committee, which convicted Sir C. Hotham of incapacity as regarded the management of the fleet, and showed that certain peers and bishops were of opinion they could manage it a great deal better. According to these tacticians, a little alteration in the management of the squadron, and a little additional expense, and the thing was done. It was amusing to hear persons talk in this quiet way of increasing the force of the squadron at "little or no additional expense," as if the British Government was under no obligation, either to their own subjects or to other States, but to try rash experiments for the suppression of the slave-trade. Was the House aware of the amount of force at present employed in the suppression of the slave-trade? It amounted to one-fourth of the whole British navy afloat, exclusive of packets and surveying vessels. There were twenty-six vessels stationed on the west coast of Africa, which, added to those acting in connection with them which were stationed off the West Indies, the coast of South America, and other places, made up a force of thirty-nine or forty ships. Yet this immense force was, in the opinion of naval officers who had been last employed in the service, wholly inadequate to effect the object for which it was maintained. We were going on expending £700,000 annually in the prosecution of this system, and yet this expenditure was too small, in the opinion of certain noble lords, naval captains, and others, who saw nothing objectionable in augmenting expense on this score. He hoped the noble lord would excuse him for presuming to think that in the present state of the national finances the country ought not to be subjected to the burden of £700,000 a-year to maintain an abortive system. It was not, however, solely on the ground of expense that he objected to the system. He objected to it on account of its futility. He objected to it on account of its cruelty. He objected to it because he disliked to see a great and noble country engaged in a conflict carried on by means so violent and at the same time so utterly inadequate to the end proposed, as to cut us off from the co-operation and sympathy of other States. He objected to it on account of the bad terms on which it placed the people of Brazil and the people of this country. And, finally, he objected to it on account of the angry feelings and menacing quarrels in which it frequently involved us with France and America—quarrels which, he feared, would soon again be revived. In his opinion it was a sinister and ridiculous philanthropy which, for the sake of an abortive system directed to the suppression of the slave-trade, would incur the risk of involving this country in the guilt and the horrors of war. It was said that some plan—whence it was to proceed or what was its outline he knew not—was to be proposed for bringing this unfortunate business to a satisfactory conclusion. During the last twenty years this had uniformly been the story of those who were anxious to keep up the system. He had heard it so often that he no longer gave it any belief. When he first entered the house, eighteen years ago, it was stated, in a discussion which took place on the estimates, that if the Government could only succeed in some negotiations which were then going on, the question would be settled at once. Subsequently the house was told that the equipment clause would settle the business. In the next place, it was to be done by instituting a stricter blockade on the coast of Africa. Then all hopes rested upon the operation of the combined fleets of England and France; and, finally, the suppressionists looked for the attainment of their object to a most anomalous proceeding, by which the slave-traders of Brazil were made responsible to the municipal laws of England; in short, it was evident that we had been following for years an *ignis fatuus*. Was this country again to be taken in by this old and exploded system?

Vain fancy, it is all a cheat;
Yet, foiled by hope, men favour the deceit;
Hope on, and trust to-morrow sure will pay;
To-morrow's falser than the former day—
Lies more.

He had now done. He would not weary the House with any laboured peroration. He had, he thought, made out his case, and he now appealed to the members of the House, as the guardians of the interests and the prosperity of the country, as the protectors of its honour and its fame, as humane and Christian men, to put an end to this cruel and delusive system, whose final doom could not be very distant, by supporting the motion which he had now the honour to submit.

Mr. BAILLIE said, that in rising to second the motion, he wished it to be understood, that he did not do so as the advocate or representative of any particular party. Those who were connected with the West Indian colonies were, he believed, for the most part, opposed to the motion. They conceived that the maintenance of the squadron on the African coast, by enhancing the price which the Brazilian and Cuban planters paid for their slaves, so far lessened the severity of competition; but he (Mr. Baillie) could not seek on their behalf, in a circuitous manner, that protection which had been openly refused. He asked the Government to adopt an honest and straightforward course with regard to the slave-trade. When the legislature passed the Bill of 1846, the question assumed a new aspect. It was then boldly proclaimed that England had already paid sufficiently for her philanthropy, and was determined to pay no more; and there could be no doubt that one result of the change of policy

which took place at that period was, that England now derived more profit and advantage from the slave-trade than any other country in the world. The English people had, in fact, incurred all the guilt which attached to that abominable traffic. To deny this was to deny that the receiver of stolen goods was equally culpable with the thief. For his own part, he preferred the thief—forasmuch as the thief incurred all the risk of danger which arose from his act, the receiver, while assuming an appearance of honesty, tempted others to the commission of crimes of which he shared the proceeds. Slaves were purchased on the coast of Africa with goods manufactured in Manchester and Birmingham, having been previously sent to Cuba and Brazil, whence to be exchanged for the produce of slave labour. Brazilian mines and estates had been stocked and worked with slaves purchased with British capital. Lastly, England supplied the best market in the world for the produce of slave labour. Could it be denied, then, that England derived more profit than any other country from the slave-trade?

Mr. W. EVANS, who had given notice of an amendment, which he now withdrew, combated many of the facts put forward by Mr. Hutt, and disputed the correctness of his conclusions, urging that it would be an awful thing to leave the whole African coast exposed to the lawless piracy and ruffianism of slave-traders, and recommending, as a means of diminishing the expense of the squadron, the employment of smaller vessels.

Mr. LABOUCHERE regarded this question as involving not only the cause of humanity, but the character and honour of this country, if our squadron was to be withdrawn from the coast of Africa without any substitute; and deprecated the announcement, by the Commons of England, that hereafter this horrible traffic might prevail over every sea without let or hindrance. He believed the people of England would not acquiesce, from motives of economy, in such a retrograde and degenerate course without the substitution of some other system. The squadron, it was said, had not succeeded in suppressing the trade. Nobody expected it would, without other measures; but the withdrawal of the squadron, until other measures had time to come into operation and vigour, would aggravate the horrors of the slave-trade, extinguish the seeds of civilisation in Africa, replunge that continent in the worst horrors of barbarism, and give a stimulus to slavery in Cuba and Brazil. The argument that the exertions of the African squadron had been useless, was inconsistent with the difference of prices of slaves, the present high cost of a negro at Cuba and Brazil proving that a practical limit had been put upon the transport of natives of Africa across the Atlantic. Mr. Labouchere cited the testimony of Sir C. Hotham, a witness, whose evidence had been invoked by Mr. Hutt, to the evil effects of withdrawing the squadron without a substitute; drew a very encouraging picture of the progress made in civilising the races on the coast of Africa, chiefly through the influence of the republic of Liberia; and pointed out the inevitable consequences of the resolution upon our sugar-growing colonies, which, suffering from a dearth of labour, would have to contend with foreign sugar-producing countries commanding an unlimited supply of slave labour at a cheaper rate.

Mr. GRANTLEY BERKELEY, in supporting the motion, described the depression of our sugar colonies, and insisted that the only effectual mode of putting down the slave-trade was to stop the admission of slave produce into this country.

Sir G. PECHELL would not consent to a measure which must lower the station which this country had always maintained. Though the squadron had not been efficient enough, it had performed a large amount of good, and ships must be maintained on the African coast to protect the factories and legitimate commerce.

Mr. ANSTAY maintained that our blockade of the west coast of Africa, for the attainment of an Utopian object, was a violation of the law of nations. He concurred with Mr. Hutt in the expediency of removing the squadron, which had increased the exportation of negroes and aggravated their sufferings in the passage.

Sir R. H. INGLIS would say, in answer to the appeal made to those who opposed this motion, that he would cordially concur in a proposition to repeal the Sugar Duties Act. Believing that the great cause of Christian humanity, with respect to the slave-trade, had always found its consistent and powerful advocates in the party now represented by the noble lord at the head of the Government, he (Sir R. Inglis) grieved to think that there was such a deviation from the true principle upon which the slave-trade ought ever to be resisted, and never directly or indirectly encouraged, as that which his noble friend permitted himself to sanction when he introduced the Sugar Duties Act. The hon. and learned gentleman (Mr. Anstay) talked of "what were called treaties;" they were in the best form that could be devised, and were made intelligible to the parties. On a former occasion the cost of the blockading squadron was stated to be £500,000; this year it was £700,000; and the hon. and learned member made it out to be £1,000,000. What did the return from the Admiralty show to be really the expense? For 1846, 1847, it was £301,600—that included wear and tear, coals, wages, &c. If an address to the Crown were agreed to, not even this sum could be saved, but only the proportion which the expenditure of twelve ships bore to that of twenty-four; for twelve, according to Sir C. Hotham, we must maintain for the protection of lawful commerce. Was Parliament prepared, for the sake of this, to set at nought solemn obligations, incurred in the face of the world, to put an end to the great curse and crime which had desolated Africa and dishonoured Christian Europe? It was urged that the squadron had not eradicated the slave-trade. But since the equipment clause had been in full operation the number of captures had been immensely greater than could be collected from the speeches of the mover and seconder. In the period 1830 to 1838 he believed that not more than 166 slavers were taken; but in the period, 1840 to 1848, 625 vessels were captured.

Lord H. VANE supported the motion, not on the ground of economy, but from a conviction that the treaties with Spain and Portugal had been inoperative, and that to make the blockade effectual it must be upon a vast scale.

Mr. CARDWELL agreed that this was a question whether we should at once and for ever surrender the policy of years, and with it the hope of civilising Africa. The arguments founded upon the alleged futility of the operations of our squadron and its expense he undertook to refute from the evidence. He acknowledged that by a marine guard alone it was impossible to command a long line of coast; but there were two other agencies at work—legitimate trade and the higher influence of Chris-

tianity; and how could these agencies continue to work if deprived of protection? He then showed on how large an extent of the coast of Africa the slave-trade had ceased; that the price of slaves had risen at Cuba through the interruption of the trade of our cruisers: that the number of slaves imported into the Brazils was not regulated by the demand, but by the facilities of escaping our squadron. The question resolved itself into this: make the slave-trade easy, and it will be easier for black, or Spanish, or Portuguese savages, to obtain better returns in human flesh than in palm oil. Finding such strong evidence of the progress of civilisation and of legitimate commerce in Africa, he could not, as an honest man, take upon himself to paralyse the hands of those who had been instrumental in accomplishing these changes, by consenting to withdraw our squadron, and leave the coasts of Africa to the horrors of piracy as well as the slave-trade.

Captain PELHAM spoke in opposition to the motion.

Mr. GLADSTONE, declaring his intention to vote in favour of the motion, observed, that it contemplated only the single treaty with France, which placed this country in a position so anomalous and preposterous as justified a motion to put an end to it. He joined with those who stigmatised the slave-trade as a detestable traffic; but the system of armed repression had long ago been pronounced futile by Sir F. Buxton; it had been condemned by Lord J. Russell and by the most responsible and credible witnesses. Was this to be made a permanent system? or would the house look the subject fairly in the face, and come to some decisive resolution? The opinion of Sir C. Hotham—who did not counsel the removal of the squadron conditionally, but absolutely—said, that if the trade were stopped at one place, it broke out at another. This fact invalidated the argument formed upon the statement that parts of the coast were clear. Had the squadron extinguished the trade? No. Had it made a progress towards its extinction? That was the real issue; and Mr. Gladstone read statements of the prices of slaves, and of the percentage of captures in successive years, contending that the figures showed that there had been no progress, but rather a retrogression. Although the burden cast upon the people of England by this charge was not limited to £700,000, that was not his main motive; he wanted to grapple with the question on the ground of humanity and philanthropy, and he had come to the conclusion, from evidence of which he gave the details, that the present system of repression did not diminish, but, on the contrary, had a tendency to increase, the sum of human wretchedness. Then he might be asked, what other course he would suggest? If we wished to maintain a character for sincerity with foreign nations—if we wished them to believe that we would allow nothing to interfere with our endeavours to put an end to the slave-trade, we never should have passed the Sugar Bill of 1846. Doubtless the right hon. gentleman could show that there were motives of convenience and policy sufficient to justify the passing of that measure—that was a discussion into which he would not then enter—but, having taken that step, he defied them to re-establish their reputation for sincerity with foreign nations. If we wished to have the appearance of being really desirous of suppressing the slave-trade, our first act should be the repeal of the bill of 1846. They must do this, not only to beget that opinion of their single-mindedness, but also because this was the most powerful means they had of checking the slave-trade. We must double our squadron, obtain the right of search from France and America, with power to punish foreign crews; and lastly, we must force Spain and Brazil to fulfil their treaties. Without these conditions—and they were almost hopeless—the success of our squadron in Africa would be visionary.

Lord J. RUSSELL said he owned that he was more anxious than he ever remembered to have been that the House, when it came to a division upon this subject, should have a due sense of its importance, an importance which it was impossible for any one to exaggerate or state, even in its full amount. At the beginning of this century, England, in all her colonies, carried on and permitted the slave-trade; and the other powers of Europe which had colonies, wherever they could carry on the slave-trade likewise, permitted and sanctioned it. During the time which had since elapsed, they had seen the Parliament of England abolish the slave-trade; they had seen England at the treaty of Paris make stipulations with all the nations of Europe in condemnation of the slave-trade; they had seen slavery itself abolished by the act of the English Parliament; they had seen the slave-trade abolished, practically, effectually, and utterly, both by France and the United States; and they had seen slavery itself very lately abolished in France and Denmark. It was a subsequent part of the argument which these considerations suggested, that there were countries in Africa which, not many years ago, were the strongholds of the slave-trade, but which had been rescued from participation in that criminal traffic, and that the arts of industry and trade flourished in those places which had been the temples of that horrible idol. It was at the end of these triumphs of humanity that they were asked now to begin their course in another half-century by a retrograde step, going back on all they had hitherto done, proclaiming to the world by that first step that they would no longer take those measures against the slave-trade which they had hitherto taken, and that they had no substitute to put in their place, and therefore spreading discouragement everywhere amongst those who, admiring their example as a proof of those Christian maxims they professed, and wishing practically to act in the same manner, endeavoured to repeat that example in accordance with the same maxims, and to abolish this horrible crime. To speak only of that country to which the right hon. gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) last alluded, namely, Brazil, it was stated that the noble lord (Lord Palmerston) gave evidence that there was a party in that country which was hostile to the slave-trade. Since his noble friend had given that evidence later accounts had been received, from which, he was sorry to say it, the language of that party appeared to express the fear that England was about to cease to take the lead in the great work of abolishing slavery, and that it would be a hopeless task for them to raise their heads against the storm of opposition. The right hon. gentleman had given a not very correct account of the object and effect of the present measure. He stated that it was necessary, as a first step, in order that this country should be free, to consider what they should hereafter do to be relieved from the obligations of the treaty made with France. That treaty, as well as the treaty with America, arose from objections made in the French popular assembly to allowing England the right of search, and as a substitute for that right of search, the French Government agreed to put cruisers of their own on the coast of Africa, which would prevent

the French flag being desecrated to the purposes of the slave-trade; and gave by the same treaty a right of visit to the British cruisers, not meaning to give what was technically termed the right of search. That treaty, though the number of vessels had been diminished, had been most faithfully observed by France; but he was not prepared to say that France, the United States, or any country in the world, was entirely agreed in holding the views which this country had not only hitherto professed, but sincerely entertained; and he had no doubt, if France were asked to relieve England of the obligation of the treaty they would be relieved. But it must be borne in mind, that when once this country was relieved from that treaty, every slaver might hoist the French flag. Agreeably to the present stipulations, this country could not reserve the right to search such vessels, to see whether they were engaged in the slave-trade or in a national traffic. In the same way, the flag of the United States would be used by slavers to cover the slave-trade; and Great Britain having abjured the treaties, no means would exist to prevent the slave-trade being carried on. Therefore the effect would not be, as had been alleged, that this country would give itself the power to act as it thought fit, for the first step would be, that the flags of France and the United States would be used to cover the slave-trade in ships which were now subject to the visit of French or American cruisers. The hon. member who made the motion, and the hon. member who followed, did not disguise that their object was to restore the slave-trade—to restore what the hon. member who seconded the motion called free trade in slaves. It was that motion which he (Lord J. Russell) called on the House not to sanction; and in calling on the House not to sanction it, he did not prevent any consideration of the subject which might be thought hereafter advisable for the purpose of securing the better suppression of the slave-trade. But what he asked the House not to assent to was the simple reversal of all their policy, and to say in so many words that they should not take means to put down the slave-trade by a marine force, or other means. Reference had been made to a remark of Sir F. Buxton, that measures of this kind would never put down the slave-trade. But that language was intended not to induce the Government and the country to relinquish those means of repression; but in order to show that they were not sufficient, and to induce Parliament and the Government to sanction the use of additional means. There was all the difference in the world between these applications of the argument. In 1839 he (Lord J. Russell) urged that they should try to civilise Africa, and thereby obtain the means of cutting off the traffic at its very root. The right hon. gentleman alleged various reasons which led him to think the plan of repression by a squadron inefficient. The argument was hardly justified by documents. The right hon. gentleman alluded to the mortality which had taken place in a slave ship under Sir W. Dolbein's act. The accounts of the mortality generally were very inaccurate, and were described as being so by Dr. Cliffe, who furnished them to Mr. Bandinell. Viewing the question as one of humanity, it was stated that the operations of the squadron aggravated the evils of the passage. Sir C. Hotham said exactly the reverse, observing that if, instead of maintaining the present plan, the trade were left free, small capitalists would engage in the traffic, who would not provide such perfect means for the transport of the slaves as were now provided. And therefore he thought the horrors of the trade would increase. Captain Mansell was asked, "Can you tell the committee whether it would lead to greater enormities?" "I think it is very doubtful whether they would be more or less—they would be as crowded as now, and more so—the mortality, I think, in Brazil would increase. I think if the slave-trade were unrestricted, the life of the slave in Brazil would be scarcely worth a year's purchase." So much for the value of the life of the slave in Brazil, arising from the natural consequence of their exceeding cheapness. "Do you think that the crowding of the slaves has increased since the presence of the squadron?" "No." "State to the committee why you do not?" "I know that when the slave-trade was legal, they were crowded as much as they could be; and a worse class of vessels was employed then than now. The air could only be admitted down the centre, and though they are still crowded as much as can be, they are only one deep, because the vessels are smaller." So that they had the opinions of Sir C. Hotham and Captain Mansell, in direct contradiction of the ground of the motion, that the suffering, disease, and mortality would probably be greater if the slave-trade were set comparatively free, than under the present system. Another main reason for this proposition was the economy of saving expenditure; but he thought, that as the debate had proceeded, that ground of economy had very much failed from those who had brought it forward. The hon. gentleman who made the motion said that £700,000 a-year was under the cost of the squadron, and that it was probably nearer £800,000; but when they came to investigate that charge, they found that Sir C. Hotham said that we should be obliged to keep ten or twelve vessels where we now kept twenty-six, so that, whatever that expense might be, nearly half of it would be still required. The right hon. gentleman who spoke last said he would not give up the whole means of repressing the slave-trade, because if he found the Portuguese or any other nation wishing to suppress it, we should be able to aid them. But how aid them? By our mere countenance and cordial concurrence?—because that was of very little use to those who were engaged in suppressing the slave-trade; but if by means of mariners or soldiers, we should again incur the expense which it was the object of this motion to prevent. He thought, therefore, that it was impossible to believe either that we could diminish the sufferings of the passage or be able much to diminish the expense: that was to say, unless we abandoned the African coast altogether, and gave up all that protection of commerce which, in other parts of the world, was thought necessary; and that, certainly, they never would attempt; for, if there were any commerce in the world which deserved protection, or to which the British naval force ought to give its aid, it was that commerce which had sprung up in parts of Africa which had recently been the seat of the slave-trade, and which could not thrive unless it received the constant aid and protection of our navy. Sir C. Hotham said decidedly, upon this question, that the lives of British subjects would not be safe otherwise; and that great witness of the committee, whom they seemed so much to have trusted (Dr. Cliffe), said before the Lords, that there had been a great deal of passion and revenge in consequence of our suppressing the slave-trade before, and that there would be great suffering and violence inflicted. It would, therefore, be absolutely necessary to keep up some force. Well, then, if the main reasons in favour of this

motion were proved to have failed, he asked the House next to consider what were the evils that its adoption would bring. He would here state the opinion of Sir C. Hotham, whose authority was so much relied on. He was asked whether the squadron ought, in his opinion, to be withdrawn? and he answered, "My opinion is, that to withdraw the squadron without providing a substitute would be highly injurious to the honour of this great country, which has been engaged so long in this particular affair that I should regret to hear that the squadron had been obliged to withdraw and nothing was substituted in its place." Now, let the House recollect that Sir C. Hotham might be right or wrong, but that it was a fair question to place before the Parliament of this country that they might substitute for the present system another, which would be more efficacious in extinguishing the slave-trade. But that was a totally different question from the one before the House, which was whether they should destroy the means we had at present without substituting anything whatever in its place. The first objection to that plan was, therefore, that it would be highly injurious to the honour of this country. In the next place, he thought it would be impossible, without a greater force even than we now kept up, to preserve from the slave-trade those parts of Africa which had been rescued from it. In the immediate rush that there would be for the purpose of buying slaves in the unrestricted slave-trade, there would be attempts made—instantly and violently made—to restore the slave-trade in those places where our commerce now prevailed; and when they considered the profits to be gained from the trade, he thought that many of those African chiefs who had renounced it, would, seeing that England was indifferent on the matter, again resort to it, and that we should be obliged to protect our legitimate commerce with an immense force. The next objection was, that such an unrestricted slave-trade would destroy the civilisation of Africa. It would destroy all the hopes of introducing civilisation and Christianity into Africa. We could no longer expect, with the slave-trade, to accomplish any such object. In the next place, they had to consider what would be the effect of the immense importation of slaves into Brazil. What that importation might be, we might a little gather from the evidence of Lord Howden, who stated that a cargo which was worth £5,000 in Africa, was worth £25,000 in Brazil, making, as he said, 500 per cent. of profit. If such were the gains, it was clear that numbers of small capitalists would enter into this venture—that they would reduce the rate of profit to little above the ordinary profit of the world—and that immense numbers of slaves would be introduced in consequence. But what was the state of Brazil? There were there vast tracts of uncultivated land, as fit for the cultivation of sugar as the richest part of Trinidad or Guiana, which would immediately be cultivated for the purpose of producing sugar. Immense suffering must follow. The right hon. gentleman had said that he would put this question upon the issue of whether the mass of human misery would be increased or diminished by this change. He (Lord J. Russell) said that, beyond a doubt, it would be increased both in Africa and Brazil. Now, what was the speculation at present going on in Brazil? They said, seeing that the opinions of the committee leant to the abandonment of all our efforts for the suppression of the slave-trade, that the probability was that they should very soon be able to cultivate sugar so cheaply that no country in the world would furnish sugar to Europe except Brazil. Well, it was admitted on all hands—it was the testimony of almost every witness who had spoken on the subject—that at first there would be an increase of importation into Brazil. Of that there was no doubt. Let the House, then, conceive the effect of that immense production of sugar which must follow from such an introduction. That brought them certainly to another question, to which his right hon. friend had very properly alluded; because, though this question was connected with humanity, it was likewise connected with our own interests—he meant the effect upon the West Indies of a competition thus set free and thus strengthened in its means. He was not going to argue the question of the sugar duties of 1846, but he fully admitted that by the abolition of slavery in 1833, and by the abolition of the prohibitory duty in 1846, they had placed our West India islands at a great disadvantage. He was happy to see, however, that the opinion which he had stated on both occasions—that they would be able to bear those shocks, and that they would found their cultivation of sugar upon a new basis, on which they might again thrive—had not been entirely disappointed. On the contrary, he observed from the returns that the production of sugar in Jamaica, Trinidad, and Guiana for 1847 and 1848 had been greater than in 1845 and 1846; and he believed that in 1849 it had been greater than in 1848. If that were the case, it showed that the Africans in our West India islands had been induced, as he had expected, to labour for less wages, and that successful industry was carried on in those islands at the present moment; but, after the blows (and he admitted that they were blows) that they had sustained, they would be in the utmost danger, if again a great advantage were given to the commerce of Brazil by the admission of an immense number of slaves, and the free competition of their labour against the produce of our West India islands. He thought it would be more than the West Indies would be able to bear—that they would be unable to stand against that competition. That, in itself, would be not only a great misfortune as regarded our interests, but a great misfortune in the contest that had been carried on in the great cause of free labour against slave labour. There were, then, these three, as he thought, conclusive reasons against the motion now proposed:—In the first place, it would give very greatly increased activity to the slave-trade; in the next place, it would prevent the civilisation of Africa; and, in the third place, it would expose to a ruinous competition the produce of the free labour of our West India islands. But the right hon. gentleman and the hon. mover of this proposition asked, what it was that the Government proposed to do whilst continuing the present system? And the right hon. gentleman said that the speech of his right hon. friend would have done for any time. He (Lord J. Russell) considered that within the last few years we had, by means of that squadron, been making progress on the coast of Africa. That the slave-trade had not been utterly suppressed—that it would not be utterly suppressed by such means, he was ready to admit—but the greater the territory that was civilised, the greater the area from which the slave-trade was excluded, the less was the evil with which we had to cope, and the more manageable would that evil become. Were there no other means? The committee had completely shut out all means of force. They told us that the destruction of barracoons and the infliction of the penalty of piracy on the captains and crews of vessels engaged in the slave-trade were not to be thought of as remedies of the present evil. For his

own part, he believed that the destruction of barracoons and the occupation of forts on the coast of Africa were most powerful means for the suppression of the slave-trade in territories in their immediate neighbourhood; and he thought all the evidence they had heard, and the despatches they had received went to prove that such was the case. He expected, then, much advantage from the continuance of that practice. The right hon. gentleman had alluded to the opinion of Europe with respect to our policy on all questions of the slave-trade. His (Lord John Russell's) opinion was, that if we were to address the different powers of Europe we should now find that opinion was more enlightened on this subject than when we began, in 1815, to inform them of our views of the matter. We had seen that they had cheerfully co-operated with us in repressing the slave-trade; and he believed, if England and France and the United States of America, having each of them suppressed their own slave-trade, were to use language, not unfriendly, but at the same time strong, to Spain and Brazil, that such language, from such united countries, so free and so powerful, would have a great effect upon the State and Government of those countries. That they would despise that warning he was not ready to believe. If they did so—if they took no measures for the repression of the slave-trade, then we would have again to consider the whole question as to what progress we had made—whether the slave-trade had been more repressed during last year than during the present year, and what means remained for its repression. That there were other means he thought no one would deny, but they were means which had been at once condemned and rejected by a majority of the committee. That committee having been appointed to consider the best means which Great Britain could adopt to promote the final extinction of the slave-trade, seemed to have had—or at least a majority of them seemed to have had—no other thought but how to condemn and reprobate every means by which the slave-trade could be extinguished, and how they could best keep alive the means by which it could be nourished and maintained. But as to the final suppression of the slave-trade, he for one would not despond. He believed that despondency in a great cause was of itself a main cause of failure. He believed that this cause, which had enlisted gradually the different nations of the world in its favour, and which had now only Spain, in one of its colonies, and the empire of Brazil, in active opposition to it—he believed that this cause was anything but hopeless. He believed that nothing could destroy it but the want of that moral courage which the right hon. gentleman had spoken of. He believed that nothing but utter faint-heartedness could induce those to say that they were unequal to cope with the great question of the final and permanent suppression of the slave-trade. But there were other motives which he thought might influence the House in coming to a decision upon the question. This country had been blessed with great mercies during the past year. More than once they had had to thank Almighty God for the dispensation of those mercies. He owned it appeared to him, that if they were now to say that the trade in man should be revived—that that unhallowed and cruel traffic, against which England for fifty years had been working by the efforts of her greatest statesmen and the hands of her best and bravest sailors—if they were to say that that traffic were now to be allowed to go free and unscathed, they would no longer have a right to expect these mercies. He considered that the high Christian and moral character of a nation was its main source of security and strength. If that night the House were to direct the Foreign Minister of the Crown to go with a dastardly message to France, to give up the high and holy work, because we were no longer fitted to take the lead in the championship against the curse and crime of slavery, he thought they could no longer venture to expect a continuance of those blessings which this country had so long enjoyed.

Lord R. GROSVENOR said, that during the twenty-eight years which he had had the honour of a seat in that House, it had been his good fortune never to have differed with his noble friend (Lord J. Russell) upon any essential point of policy; but on this occasion he felt under the painful necessity of voting for the motion of the hon. member for Gateshead, on the ground that it would prevent this country from continuing to attempt the moral government of the world upon principles which, in his understanding, were and had been condemned by the moral Governor of the universe on every page of his work.

The house then divided. The numbers were—

For the motion	154
Against it	232
Majority.....	78

UNITED STATES CONGRESS—PROCEEDINGS OF THE SENATE.

January 31st.

Mr. Mason of Va. offered a Bill as a substitute for the one before the Senate in relation to the re-capture of fugitive slaves. He asked that it be laid on the table and printed, which was agreed to. The Bill provides—

1st. That the judges of the District Courts of the United States and the judges of the superior courts of the organised territories shall appoint three commissioners in each State or territory, authorising and requiring them to grant certificates to all claimants of fugitives upon satisfactory proof being given, with authority to take and remove their slave property to the State or territory from which it may have escaped. The second clause empowers the abovementioned commissioners—(slave-catchers would be the proper word)—“to execute all warrants and precepts under this Act, and appoint suitable persons to execute them; also power to call to their aid the *posse comitatus* of the proper county, and command all good citizens to assist, if need be, in the prompt and efficient execution of this law.” The third clause provides that the master or agent of a fugitive slave may pursue and reclaim him from some one of the courts, judges, or commissioners aforesaid; or where the same can be done without process, he may seize him himself, and bring him before such judge, court, or commissioner, whose duty it shall be to hear and decide the case of such claimant in a summary manner; and, if proof is given that the slave did escape, that his service is due to the claimant, he is to be provided with a certificate to that effect, and may remove the slave forthwith to the State or territory from which he escaped. It also

provides that in no trial or hearing under this Act shall the testimony of the alleged fugitive be admitted as evidence. Article 4 provides that any person who shall obstruct, hinder, or prevent such claimant, his agent or attorney, from arresting a fugitive slave, either with or without process, aforesaid, or who shall harbour or conceal any fugitive, shall be subject to a fine of 500 dollars, and imprisonment not exceeding six months. The fifth and last clause provides the amount of fees which shall be paid to the negro-catchers, &c. It is not unlikely that the main features of this Bill will become the law of the land, but no legislation can check the impulses of humanity, and the South will find, ere long, to their cost, that by such enactments as these they only render their hateful institution the more odious to the people of the North, and hasten its downfall.

In the House, the resolution of Mr. Root, offered on December 31, in order to amend so as to read, "That the Committee on Territories be instructed to report to the House, with as little delay as practicable, a Bill or Bills providing a Territorial Government or Governments for all that part of the territory ceded to the United States by Mexico by the treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, lying eastward of California, and prohibiting slavery therein," was taken up. Pending the resolutions, Mr. Haralson moved that the resolution be laid on the table—agreed to, 105 ayes to 78 nays. Fifteen northern whigs and seventeen northern democrats voted with the South, and twenty-seven more northern members were absent when the question was taken. Mr. Giddings offered the following:

"Whereas, we hold these truths to be self-evident—that all men are created equal—that they are endowed by their Creator with the right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness—and that Governments are constituted for the purpose of maintaining these rights: therefore,

"Resolved—That, in constituting Governments in any territory, it is the duty of Congress to secure to all the people thereof, of whatever complexion, the enjoyment of the rights aforesaid."

Mr. Inge moved to lay the resolution on the table, which was agreed to by a vote of 104 to 89.

Mr. Cobb of Ala. introduced a preamble, concluding with resolutions, that the Senate appoint twelve members—six from the South and six from the North—and that the House appoint twenty—ten from the North and ten from the South—to meet and devise a plan, predicated on constitutional principles, to settle existing difficulties; and that they submit the plan to the two Houses, that the harmony of the two sections may be perpetuated. Some objection being made, the resolution lies over for future action.

Mr. Clay again addressed the Senate on February 26th, in support of his compromise, and spoke until the hour of adjournment.

The speech of Mr. Clay upon his compromise resolutions, which occupied two days in its delivery, will be likely to have little or no influence in settling the agitation upon the all-important question which is now before the country. It is evident enough already, that it will meet but little favour from the slaveholding States; and equally evident, that the people of the free States will never submit to the terms of such a compromise as he proposes. He does not himself appear to consider his resolutions as of such a compromising character as we were led to suppose, from the first brief remarks with which they were introduced. For, in the beginning of the main speech in their defence, he distinctly avers, and we quote his precise words, that, "*neither party, in some of them, make any concessions at all; in others, the concessions of forbearance are mutual; and in the third place, in reference to the slaveholding States, there are resolutions making concessions to them by the opposite class of States, without any compensation whatever being rendered by them to the non-slaveholding States.*" Thus, at the very outset, Mr. Clay admits what, by reference to the resolutions, any intelligent mind may see at a glance, that his compromise yields to the South the best end of the bargain. Taken as a whole, and considering the fact of the greater difficulty to sustain a bad cause by powerful arguments than a good one, Mr. Clay's speech is equal to any former effort upon the floor of the Senate. In support of his position, he does not hesitate to speak some truths most unpalatable to the South; and in regard to the *right* of Congress to exclude slavery from the territories, and to abolish it in the district, his argument is clear, convincing, and unanswerable. Its present *inexpediency* is what he contends for, and what he demands of the North is, that it should waive this right for the sake of peace and harmony in the confederacy. He depicts in the most gloomy colours the dangers likely to arise from a dissolution of the Union, through the agitation of the slavery question; and does not hesitate to tell the South, however unpalatable it may be, that the darkest side of his gloomy picture will be turned towards them. To the ultra-slavery propagandists, who have blustered so much about dissolution in the present session, he says:—"Let us suppose the Union dissolved—what remedy does it furnish, in its severed state, for the grievances complained of? Will you be able at the South to push slavery into the ceded territories? How are you to do it, supposing the North, or all the States north of the Potomac, are in possession of the army and navy? Sir, you cannot dream of such an occurrence. If slavery were abolished in the district of Columbia, and the Union were dissolved, would the dissolution of the Union restore slavery in the district? What would you have if the Union was severed? Why, then, the severed parts would be independent of each other—foreign countries, and slaves escaping from one to the other, would be like slaves escaping to Canada. Where one escapes now by running away, hundreds and thousands would escape, if the Union was dismembered."

Mr. Clay is for preserving the Union if possible, and he denies the right, or the existence of any power by which a State can withdraw from the confederacy; and he farther declares, that civil war and dissolution are identical and inevitable. He prefers, if it comes to fighting even, that the South should *fight in the Union*, rather than out of it.

Upon the arrest and deliverance of fugitive slaves, the senator from Kentucky has much to say. He thinks it to be the solemn and imperative duty, not only for the Northern States, but for every individual in them, to aid in the arrest of the escaped, or escaping bondman; and he enforces his views in strong terms.

On the 7th, Mr. Hale, of New Hampshire, presented the petition of the Quakers of Wisconsin, for prohibiting slavery from the territories, and moved that it be received, which motion was laid upon the table by a vote of 25 to 21.

Mr. Hale also presented a petition from Collins Centre, New York,

praying Congress to impeach the judges who had, on the false assumption that there was a law legalising slavery in the district of Columbia, imprisoned two individuals, Messrs. Drayton and Sears. Also praying for a remedy against the action of the Secretary of State, in refusing passports to coloured persons. Also against the unlawful imprisonment of free coloured people in the gaols of the district, for no crime, but for the colour of their skin. The petitions were laid on the table. Mr. Hale also presented petitions from various parts of the country, praying Congress to prohibit the slave-trade between the States. All of which were laid upon the table.

On Friday, the 8th, an animated debate sprang up in the Senate, upon a motion by Mr. Hale to receive and refer to a Committee a petition signed by citizens of Pennsylvania and Delaware, for the immediate and peaceful dissolution of the Union.

Mr. Davis, of Massachusetts, advocated the reception of petitions for the abolition of slavery, but not for the dissolution of the Union, and was highly complimented for his speech by Mr. Foote of Mississippi, who "arose," he said, "to express his cordial acquiescence in the patriotic sentiments expressed by the gentleman from Massachusetts," but went on with one of his usual harangues against Senator Hale. "He took back," he said, "his former threat to hang him if he ever came to Mississippi."

Mr. Hale replied by saying, "that as the senator from Mississippi had said, that the speech he made in the morning was the result of severe castigations he had received from the newspapers, it might be upon the same principle, then, that the speeches we get from him are to be attributed to the castigations he receives from the same sources. If so, I appeal to all the newspapers and letter writers in the country, in the name of the Senate, and in the name of humanity itself, not to castigate the senator from Mississippi, for in so doing they *punish* the Senate and the world." Mr. Foote replied, and the question was discussed until, without coming to a vote, its consideration was made the special order of the day for Monday, and Mr. Houston of Texas spoke two hours in support of his resolutions, declaratory that Congress has no power to legislate upon the subject of slavery.

In the Senate, on Monday, the 11th, the motion to receive the petition from citizens of Pennsylvania and Delaware, praying for a peaceable dissolution of the Union, again came up, and after being discussed nearly the whole day, the Senate adjourned again without a vote.

On Tuesday, the 12th, Mr. Hale, of New Hampshire, presented the petition of 1483 women of Dover, N. H., praying that slavery may not be extended in the territories, and asked that it be referred to the Committee on Territories. A motion to lay the question of reception on the table was negatived by a vote of twenty-nine to nineteen. A spirited discussion then arose upon the subject of the petition.

On Wednesday, the 13th, the petition presented by Mr. Hale on the previous day, and on which the question was pending at the adjournment, was received *without debate, and referred to the Committee on Territories*; the Southern members, probably, having come to the conclusion that the easiest and best course for them to pursue is, not to attempt any longer to abridge the right of petition. The Senate then resumed the consideration of Mr. Clay's resolutions. Mr. Davis, of Mississippi, having the floor, proceeded to address the Senate, at length, upon the question of slavery, and in reply to Mr. Clay stating that he had been bitterly disappointed in view of the course adopted by that senator. "He had hoped from him some plan of settlement, something upon which the patriotic, on all sides, could agree. Instead of that, he had presented a scheme essentially conceding to the North all that was claimed by the South. Mr. Davis took the extreme southern ground, insisting that slavery is so recognised in the Constitution as to make it an institution of the United States, and not simply of the State in which it exists. He also defended the institution of slavery itself; all history, ancient and modern, showed the Ethiopian, wherever found, in the condition of bondsmen. Slavery had been the only cause of permanent blessing to the African race, and emancipation was fraught with injury to them. It was a false humanity which sought to raise them above their condition; it was an institution of the Almighty, recognised and sanctioned by the Bible, from Genesis to Revelations."

The Senate, on the 18th, resumed the consideration of the President's message, transmitting the constitution of California—the question pending being first upon the motion to refer to the Committee on Territories, and remarks were made by Douglass, of Ill.; Clay, of Ky.; and Foote, of Miss. The latter gentleman concluding his remarks with a severe personal attack upon Mr. Benton and Mr. Clay, inquiring of the latter gentleman, whether, coming as he did from a slaveholding State, he felt himself authorised to vote for the admission of California as she now presents herself?

Mr. Clay replied with much warmth, that it was not the first time that he had been reminded that he represented a slaveholding constituency. Sir (said he), I tell the gentleman that I know whence I came—I know my duty also, and am ready to meet any responsibility which my course may incur. Much had been said about allegiance to the South, and neglect of, or treason to, her interest. For one, he knew no allegiance to the South, as a section—he owed allegiance to two sovereignties—one the sovereignty of the Union, and the other the sovereignty of the State of Kentucky. To these sovereignties he acknowledged allegiance, and to their interests he felt himself pledged; but if gentlemen supposed that he acknowledged any allegiance to a Southern confederation now, or in the prospective, he would tell them that he utterly repudiated such allegiance—he would not live under such a confederation. His duty to the Union, and to his State, he was prepared to do at all times, and having performed that to the best of his ability, according to the light that was given him, he was prepared to sustain all the responsibilities which attached to his acts.

On the 21st Mr. Seward presented the resolutions recently passed by the legislature of New York upon the subject of slavery and the admission of California into the Union, which were laid on the table and ordered to be printed. Numerous other petitions were received and referred; after which the order of the day was taken up, and Mr. Miller, of New Jersey, then proceeded to consider the general question of slavery, answering the charges of aggression made by the South against the North—charging that they were exaggerated, and that, so far as they exist, the representatives from the Northern States are ready, and ever have been, to afford to the South all necessary and proper measures for the vindication of their rights.

On Monday, the 25th, the Senate was occupied with a discussion of Mr. Clay's resolutions of compromise, and Mr. Miller, of N. J., concluded his speech. Mr. Foote, of Miss., made an unsuccessful effort to get up his resolution, proposing a committee of thirteen to take into consideration all the questions growing out of the institution of slavery. He expressed his solemn conviction that this question must be compromised during the present week, or that it would be out of their jurisdiction. Unless something was done at once, he was perfectly convinced that, before Saturday next, circumstances would occur of a character which he would do nothing more than allude to. His remarks, partaking as they did of the character of a threat, created, it is said, a good deal of "sensation," but whether of laughter or contempt the reports do not say. Some of the Northern letter writers, however, seem to consider it quite a serious affair; and the correspondent of the *Journal of Commerce*, who is probably a very timid gentleman, thus alludes to it:—

"Senator Foote's statements have created alarm. The events expected are a renewal of the struggle between North and South next Monday, and the consequence the breaking up of the House by the Southern men, who are coming armed for a contest. That is the design and expectation. Mr. Foote made his general assertion without particulars. He therefore urged the Senate to do something by Saturday. Foote was unquestionably authorised to state what he did."

Mr. Schenck, of Ohio, presented the memorial of the Convention of New Mexico, together with a plan of civil government, and asking the action of Congress thereon, and moved that it be referred to the Committee on Territories, which was agreed to by a vote of 135 to 42.

On Wednesday, Mr. Clay's resolutions were again before the Senate, and Mr. Benton addressed that body. The House went into a Committee of the whole on the President's California message. A telegraphic despatch states that Senator Foote is ill, and that Mr. Webster's compromise resolutions are said to be acceptable to every Southern senator. We hardly think Mr. Webster is prepared to stoop so low, but the lapse of a few days will show us who of the great statesmen of the country have made the highest bid for the Presidency, and sacrificed the most of principle for Southern popularity.

IMMIGRATION TO BRITISH GUIANA.

What we predicted, several years ago, respecting the importation of foreign labourers into the British colonies, has come to pass. Immense masses of such labourers have been introduced without producing any results equal to the costs. On the contrary, the several schemes under which the introduction has taken place, have been successively proved to be failures. They have led to a wasteful expenditure of colonial treasure—to the mortgaging of colonial revenues for a quarter of a century to come—and have entailed the necessity of a yet larger expenditure, and new debts, in order to replace those immigrants who, at the termination of their periods of service, may quit the colonies for their native homes. Take the case of British Guiana as an example. Upwards of £400,000 has been already expended on immigration; and, in the course of a short time, £150,000 more will be required to convey the survivors of the immigrants imported, Coolies and Kroomen, to India and Africa, according to agreement. To replace them, and keep up the cultivation, 10,000 Coolies are now required, to import whom will cost £200,000. The colony is bankrupt, for it cannot obtain a loan of money, on any security it may advance, in the British market, except on terms of the most exorbitant character. This was admitted by the Hon. Mr. Croal, in the Combined Court, on the 23rd of January last, when he said, that "if the colony was to be forced into the market, on its own credit, it never would be raised on such terms as could be afforded." They therefore hope to borrow on loan £250,000 of the British Government at four per cent. interest, £50,000 of which is to be devoted to the Demerara railroad, and £200,000 to immigration. This amount they propose to pay off by instalments, in a period of forty years; but any one may perceive that debts hanging upon a colony already said to be ruined, and which necessarily entail other debts, can never be paid, under the present system; and that of all labour, the least beneficial and the most costly is that which is imported at the public expense. The following extracts from resolutions laid before the Combined Court of British Guiana will explain the new phase which the question presents. We merely premise two things—first, that Governor Barkly declares, in a recent despatch, that "immigration must again proceed on an extensive scale, to avert the ruin of this colony," although upwards of 50,000 labourers had already been introduced into it; and, secondly, that those who are crying out for more immigrants, are the planters in the Court of Policy, Governor Barkly himself being one; and that as any or all these gentlemen can, when it may suit their purposes, disavow themselves from the colony, they incur no pecuniary responsibility connected with the reckless expenditure of the public money; and that the burden must fall on those who cannot, at present, control them. The following resolutions were submitted to the Combined Court by the Hon. Mr. Croal, on the 23rd of January last, viz.:—

"1. That the present distressed state of the agricultural interests of British Guiana are greatly aggravated by the want of continuous labour.

"2. That to mitigate the present distress as much as possible, it is necessary that a large influx of immigrants into the colony should take place without delay.

"3. That, judging from the past, it is the opinion of the Court that the only place from which a sufficient supply of immigrants can be procured in time, is from the East Indies.

"4. That his Excellency the Governor be requested to apply to the Right Hon. Her Majesty's principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, to authorise the exportation of 10,000 Coolies from Calcutta into British Guiana, under proper arrangements; and that the Loan Commissioners be authorised to raise money to pay the expenses incidental to the importation of a number not exceeding 10,000 immigrants, provided they can negotiate with her Majesty's Government to advance the money at par on the bonds of the colony.

"5. That a scheme of regulations be prepared by the Commissioners of Immigration in respect to the services of the Coolies, and nature of contracts, to be submitted to his Excellency the Governor and Court of Policy

for their approval, with a request that the same be transmitted to the Right Hon. the Secretary of State; but in such regulations no stipulations shall be made for providing the immigrant with a return passage at the expense of the colony.

"6. That parties requiring the services of such immigrants shall send in their application by a specified time, and shall also engage to pay back to the colony one half of the passage-money; and all such parties as have Coolie immigrants now under indentures on their estates, shall have a preference of supply from the new importations, to the extent, at least, of the number who may actually leave the colony by claiming their return passage."

The only alteration made in these resolutions was the following. Instead of the words, "One half of the passage-money," inserted in the 6th resolution, it was agreed that it should stand thus:—"Such portion of the passage-money as might be hereafter determined by this Court." The obvious intention of this modification of the original resolution, is to give the planter-representatives the power of escaping from the pecuniary obligations sought to be imposed.

From these resolutions, we turn to the Report of Messrs. Croal and Vander Gon Netscher, as to the new slave-regime under which the immigrants are henceforth to be placed. Omitting the preamble, we proceed to the recommendations, simply stating that it is determined that the regulations, originally intended for the Portuguese only, shall be applied to all immigrants brought into the colony at the public expense:—

"1. All Portuguese now in the colony to take out a ticket of free residence before the 1st of April, 1850.

"2. This ticket to be delivered by the Stipendiary Magistrates without a charge.

"3. The tickets to mention name, probable age, sex, time and place of residence and employ in this colony.

"4. Registers to be kept by the Stipendiary Magistrates of the tickets so delivered.

"5. Portuguese omitting to take out such ticket, liable to a fine of , and not admissible as a witness in any Court of Justice, or before a Magistrate, before showing ticket.

"6. Employers to be liable to a fine of , for employing Portuguese without the ticket of residence.

"7. All Justices of the Peace to be authorised, and the Stipendiary Magistrates to be bound to ask for or inquire after the said tickets whenever thought proper: and particularly in all cases brought before them in which Portuguese are parties or witnesses.

"8. Informers on Portuguese without tickets to receive one half of the fine inflicted.

"9. Portuguese immigrants introduced after the 1st April, 1850, to be indentured for the performance of 900 days of actual labour before a magistrate.

"10. State of wages to be secured to Portuguese during this period, one quarter of a dollar for what is considered a day's work, or task equivalent to a day's work, according to the nine hours' tariff of labour; women and children in proportion, from eight to four pence; besides free dwelling, medical attendance, and a piece of garden ground for every male adult.

"11. The employer, after fulfilment of the labourer's term of service, that is to say, after 900 days' actual labour, to give a certificate to that effect to the immigrants, on which a ticket of free residence will be given by stipendiary magistrates.

"12. Employers or employed refusing or omitting to act in conformity with this ordinance and the contract entered into, to be liable to fine or imprisonment, according to the Master and Servant Act now in force in this colony.

"13. The colony to pay dollars for passage money, and dollars for agent in Madeira, and other expenses on every adult Portuguese immigrant under fifty years old and above fifteen, and one half of this sum for every child under fifteen and above six years old, landed in a sound and healthy state of mind and body.

"14. The doctor appointed by the colony to inspect the immigrants, with the doctor practising for the estate to which the immigrants are to be allotted, to judge whether the immigrants are fit and healthy subjects, and capable to perform the general work on estates. In case of difference, the stipendiary magistrates of the district to settle the question.

"15. Half passage-money shall be paid for immigrants above the age of fifty, if proved to be the parents of good and valuable immigrants.

"16. The employers to whom the immigrants shall be indentured, to pay back to the colony one half of the passage-money at such time and on such terms as his Excellency and Combined Court shall think fit."

These shameful regulations met with no opposition from the Combined Court, and on the motion of the Hon. Mr. Croal they were referred to the Court of Policy, "in order that an ordinance might be drafted upon it, if a measure of that kind should be found necessary." The obligations arising from the 16th regulation were subsequently dispensed with. We have not space to comment on these regulations; but we believe them to be too bad to pass muster even at the Colonial Office.

To strengthen the hands of the planter-representatives, and to enable Governor Barkly to insist the more vehemently on the importation of immigrants, a meeting has been held in George Town, exclusively of those favourable to the scheme, at which the following resolutions, which will speak for themselves, were adopted; viz.:—

"That it is the opinion of this meeting, that an immediate and extensive immigration of agricultural labourers is essentially necessary to arrest the progressive decay of the colony.

"That it is the desire of this meeting, that a petition be drawn up and addressed to his Excellency the Governor and the Combined Court, praying for the application of the largest possible amount of the parliamentary loan proposed to be borrowed for this colony, to be applied to immigration purposes.

"That this meeting consider it to be of importance to have petitions drawn up to both Houses of Parliament, representing in the most forcible terms the present state of the colony, and praying for their intervention in securing to this province an immediate and extensive immigration of agricultural labourers, under proper regulations.

"That this meeting, understanding that immigration from Madeira is likely to be made immediately available, approves of the intention to renew immigration from that quarter; and trusts that the Governor and Court of Policy will procure the introduction of such labourers, under proper regulations and contracts, with as little delay as possible.

"That a committee of ten be appointed to draw up the petitions mentioned in the previous resolutions, with the least possible delay, to consist of the following gentlemen:—Messrs. Rose, Croal, Stuart, Sandbach, Tinne, White, Wm. Henry, Jno. Lane, C. Simson, and Wm. Davison."